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THE

VILLAGE MUSE;

OR,

A POEM ON SUMMER.

BY JUVENIS.

R

POETA NASCITUR, NON FIT.

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine
Deep-felt, in these appear! —————
But, wandering oft, with brute, unconscious gaze,
Man marks not ~~THE~~, marks not the mighty hand
That, ever-busy, wheels the silent spheres.

THOMSON.

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Anno 1796.



TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

IT has long been a custom with authors, in whatever class of literature they stood, to usher their performances into the world under the patronage of some Mecænas of the age they lived in. And, such is the prevalence of Fashion, that even a VILLAGE MUSE, in all the simple manners of rusticity, is ambitious of being her votary in this respect.—She begs leave to lay the firstlings of her harp at YOUR GRACE's feet, humbly soliciting the auspicious patronage of YOUR GRACE, to her feeble but well-meant efforts in the following pages.

SHE wishes to forbear the wonted language of dedications—as an enumeration of YOUR GRACE's many public and private virtues; confessing that *this* would be a task above her province—too great for the RURAL MUSE. The bare attempt of which, in her, would

only be considered by others as pedantic and presumptuous arrogance: and it would, she is sensible, be disgusting to the ear of Modesty and Virtue in the object of it. For, will the tender Philanthropist or the steady Patriot of Britannia, ever have cause to upbraid her sons with the want of living testimonies of their regard; or will *these* ever sleep without a wreath of posthumous renown?

THE falling sprig of that laurel, which is all the Muse can bind to the temples of YOUR GRACE, sprung altogether from a fibre of her own ambition; being proud to presume, that a ray of public patronage will fall far more effulgent on a *stripling* genius, when humbly stepping to the temple of Fame, under the umbrage of one of the FIRST PILLARS of NOBILITY!

THE Muse humbly congratulates YOUR GRACE, that, while a bustling world flushes only with the spark of *political enthusiasm*; and, like a SUMMER'S noon, scarcely cools to shine in the dews of Reason and Moderation, YOUR GRACE can taste all the pleasures of a rational being:—(no less the statesman; no less the patriot; no less anxious for the interests of your country!)—can stray with an amiable CONSORT and a beloved offspring thro' the groves of a Chatsworth, an Hardwick, or a Londesborough; and,



DEDICATION.

v

perhaps, while seated in a bower, to mark the beauties of an evening, may smile with candour on the lisping numbers of some VILLAGE MUSE.

YES! while a GEORGIANA points to the beauties that surround her; to some mouldering ruin, some new-discovered turret, or some favourite tree: and while Nature, emulous to please so illustrious a Visitant, bids her copses dissolve into melody, and throws her brightest verdure at your feet——'tis here that, breathing from the busy world, YOUR GRACE may feel the musing heart melt to the soft touches of *female sensibility*; while enlivening conversation may deceive the flowery moments, and, after leading to many an unexpected avenue, complete the evening walk ——For,

“ Then is the time
 “ For those whom Wisdom and whom Nature charm
 “ To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
 “ And soar above this little scene of things;
 “ To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their feet;
 “ To soothe the throbbing Passions into peace;
 “ And woo lone Quiet in her silent walks.”

As without a polish from religion and virtue—(O! may these first-fruits of genius but be consecrated to their cause!)—even the

greatest of literary prodigies has not become truly amiable, the Muse begs leave to trespass a little longer on YOUR GRACE's patience, till she breathes the very essence of her Dedication— That ETERNAL PROVIDENCE may long continue to YOUR GRACE, and an ILLUSTRIOUS FAMILY, every temporal blessing, till at last HE wafts you safe to the better joys of immortality, is the sincerest wish of,

My LORD,

Your GRACE's most humble,

obedient, and devoted servant,

THE AUTHOR.



PREFACE.

UNKNOWN to the Public or to Fame, and as a bashful candidate for the patronage of his countrymen, JUVENIS deems it necessary to give some account concerning the Firstlings of his Muse, and how her present design originated.

His first attempt then was, with budding genius under the vernal suns of youth, and at little more than the first dawnings of reason. Even then he commenced a lover of Nature, and woo'd the *Rural Muse*. Oft as he walked hand in hand with Contemplation and Retirement, has he felt the bursts of young Idea diffused by the beauties of Creation; while the bleating hills or the lowing vales, the verdant hamlet and the swarming quire, have inspired the first principles of *natural religion*, and thrill'd their GREAT MAKER to the soul!

ALONG with an account of this on SUMMER, two other of the Seasons must be considered—one on SPRING, and another on WINTER: in which humility, and juvenile simplicity would be signified, by the title of a VILLAGE MUSE. These were all written, as *some* can testify, before the Author had attained his nineteenth year.

SOME time the performance has slept in silence, save when it was produced for the inspection of a friend, or to undergo some trifling alteration. The design was at first to have a poem for every month in the year; and some parts of the SUMMER, in reality, were called by the names of the months it contains: but they were afterwards comprised into the Seasons. While, as yet, the Author had neither seen, nor heard of, "The Seasons of Thomson;" till, on communicating his thoughts to a friend, he was told, his attempt was anticipated! However, partly from motives of his own amusement, and partly for an exercise to the Muse, soon after three of the Seasons were produced. On shewing one of them to a Reverend

Gentleman,—(by whose judgment, as occupying a distinguished post in the republic of letters, he thinks that republic would be a little biased in his favour)—his candour pronounced *something handsome*: by which the Author was new-flushed with hopes and resolved on publication.

THO' he be conscious his performance will not bear the touchstone of criticism; yet he can say thus much, that he has, at least, had the privilege *to think for himself*; and that his Muse has copied that scenery of Nature, in which she herself saw her decked. He is sure he can adopt the sentiments of a judicious Critic on the Northern Bard, his master and predecessor—*That we all think for ourselves, whenever we do think; and drop it only in a slavish imitation of others.*—And, *That Nature appears uniformly the same to none of us**.—However, while the human mind continues to have the same powers, and while Nature continues to act with her constant uniformity; it will be unavoidably necessary that, in describing her walks, we sometimes hit on like ideas and similar expressions to those they have used who went before us. But we can wrap them in a new drefs; paint them in other colours; draw out fresh morals; and give a different turn even to the same ideas.

JUVENIS himself hopes, in some measure, to convince a judicious Public, that the volumes of Nature are not to be exhausted, tho' in the immortal numbers of a THOMSON; but that they, on the contrary, appear to every eye in a new form, and speak to every Fancy in a new language, with the wonderful works of the ALMIGHTY!

THE candid Critic will observe, that 'tis perfect Nature speaks, untutored in the school of Art; and that tho' she faintly soar, and feeblie sing, yet she pleads at his tribunal the tyro's allowances—her youth and inexperience!—and whispers in his ear, *That it is the duty of Criticism to foster infant Genius—and not, by any unnecessary harshness of censure discourage the first feeble flights of an unfledged Muse, and drive her back to her nest†!*

* "More's Strictures on Thomson's Seasons."

† "Analytical Review for September," 1795, p. 316.

MIGHT *budding genius* be fostered with a ray of public patronage, JUVENIS de-
spairs not of *ripening Autumn* producing something more worthy the acceptance of
his countrymen.—Moreover, should the sunless fields of SUMMER escape the cramp-
ing blights of damnation, through the influence of this friendly beam, it will be
succeeded by WINTER and the SPRING. The remaining Season, too, is intended,
where the exulting Muse hopes to hug nearer to the bosoms of Englishmen, their
boast; how the fertile plains of happy Britain ring with the mingled voice of peace,
plenty, commerce, liberty, industry, and civilized swains! But with trembling hand
let her soon strike the weeping lyre, and sing a melancholy contrast! by painting
the horrid regions where Man calls his fellow-creature SLAVE—where Humanity
sculks beneath the level of the brute—and wretched millions toil, without the re-
motest hopes of enjoying the fruits of their labour!

THE Author, too, may, ere long, have the pleasing opportunity of thanking a
good-natured Public, in his *real* name, for their patronage to juvenile exertions.
He only would be behind the scenes now, as timid kneeling in the temple of Fame,
and before the shrine of Genius, with a Muse blushing to offer the firstlings of her
harp to the scroll of departed sisters—tho' chiefly to avoid some of the ill-natured
shafts of the sons of Criticism, which might blast the budding prospects of young
Ambition, and *send back an unfledged Muse to her nest!*

May, 1796.

JUVENIS.

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THE VILLAGE MUSE.

COME, sweet Retirement! drooping Fancy's aid,
And hug thy vot'ry to the rural shade:
Thou, Contemplation's, be the Muse's friend,
From the rude rabble all her hours defend:
She, by fair Nature's holy converse won,
Comes, unprotected, from the *vernal* Sun,
T' eclipse her pinions, with Ambition's dreams,
In lost effulgence of the *SUMMER* themes.
Deign, then, thy heavenly blessings to convey,
And shed thy roses on her youthful lay.

BUT hold!—my soul, the sordid wreath disdain!
The Muse a fable,—inspiration vain:
Save the pure kindlings from *PERFECTION'S* SIRE,
The touch benignant of celestial fire.
O! then, thou *PATRON* of th' aspiring youth,
Who loves *THY* precepts, and reveres *THY* truth;

PATRON of WISDOM, not the *rhyming throng*,
Tune the chaste verse, and consecrate the song!
Be THOU, from whom too bold Ambition springs;
Be virtue merit on the faltering strings: 20
Breathe hallow'd flame—eternal truths inspire,
To sweep, symphonious, on thy DAVID's lyre.

No more of *SPRING*, or equal, softening air,
The calm, the cool, the fragrant, and the fair;
Heats, tyrannizing, dart the scorching ray, 25
And rule with rigour to the subject Day.
Sultry the hours; and, long, the blaze of light
Leaves but grey twilight to the dubious night.

Now let me, early as the dusk of morn,
Taste the cool freshness of the dewy dawn: 30
When, by luxurious Lethargy betray'd,
Buried in sleep the silent city's laid;
Save where the shuttle or the mallet cloy,
And busy Commerce wakes the sound of joy.
Hark! Sloth's dull sluggard, from inglorious rest, 35
Rails at the lark, that twitters from her nest.
A while he yawns—till Sloth her poppies play,
He's rock'd, unconscious of the blushing day.

Blush on, ye Skies! shew other worlds the gaze,
 For man alone neglects the matin praise! 49
 See! swoln with wine, on fuddled Riot's heel,
 Sham'd of himself, behold the drunkard reel;
 Torpid, till night's in revelry begun,
 He shuns the glance of an upbraiding sun.
 May now my footsteps brush the dews away, 45
 For sober Nature's in her mantle grey;
 To catch th' inspiring thought—ideas frame—
 While Meditation feeds the Muse's flame;
 To lisp the praises of th' ETERNAL SIRE,
 And join devotion to the woodland quire. 59

DARKNESS retires, to farther grottos hurl'd,
 And Light shoots gently o'er the shadowy world,
 Sweet is the dawn!—pure, pearly breezes play,
 Unfir'd, unemptied by the beams of Day:
 Untainted yet, no sick'ning vapours choke, 55
 In sooty atoms from the village smoke:
 The healthy lungs breathe balm from yonder view,
 Where rape full-blossoms with a load of dew;
 And waves, in golden fragrance, to the gale,
 To mix its sweetness with the clovery vale. 60
 In nestling bands the vocal chiefs awake,
 And, chirping, flutter from the bushy brake:

Each to the grove he loves, rejoicing, springs,
His way scarce lighted ere he gayly sings.
The thrush pours forth her wild, untutor'd strains; 65
The blackbird hastens to salute the plains:
The lark shoots upward, and, on pinions strong,
Hails the blue Morn, and thrills his matin song;
High over head he mingles with the skies,
The nest delighted, where his fair-one lies: 70
Proud of his charge, he looks, and bounds again,
Still his lov'd partner fires the father strain;
Till lost to human sight, his twitterings tell,
He drops, unseen, amid the flowery dell.

SEE there! the bonny milkmaid scuds the lawn, 75
Fresh as the lily, or the meek-ey'd Dawn:
Beneath whose tinctur'd cheek, of russet hue,
Flows health, e'en rival to the rosy dew.
Cheerful, each morn she trips the misty plain,
And, oft attended by her favourite swain, 80
With Joy and light-foot Mirth, or Rural Song,
They onward march, nor think the morn too long.
The lowing kine stand near th' accustom'd rill,
The well-known footpath, or the flowery hill.
Some ruminating lie—some, meaning round, 85
With wide-stretch'd udders sweep the leafy ground.

The paps with both her hands she, ardent, plies,
 And each brown cow her emptied pail supplies:
 If from the herd an individual stray,
 Or range, unmindful, where the lambkins play,
 And Betsy whisper where the truant hies,
 Young Hodge runs quickly to bring back the prize:
 Then near his fair-one chants his rustic strains,
 And milk, the sweetest, shall reward his pains.
 The trusty afs, acquir'd his dashing load, 95
 Goes homeward, plodding through the village road.
 Her brimming part, some kind assistance due,
 A kiss must fasten on her bonnet blue.
 In bashful haste the daring swain then speeds,
 With scrip replenish'd, for the russet meads: 100
 While yet 'tis cool, ere sick'ning horrors broil,
 He hastes, gigantic, to the mower's toil.
 Boastful of labour, with a workman's pride,
 A dart hangs pointed at his sinewy side;
 Fair to his might, the speary vallies view, 105
 How fresh they stoop beneath the clustering dew!
 See! where the tyrant bears an iron yoke,
 The grassy nations totter at the stroke:
 His brawny arm at every manly writhe
 Lays the long swaithe, fair-sweeping from the scythe. 110

THE dappled Day now fast o'er ether springs,
 And paints the landskip on his silver wings.
 Aurora streaks the fringed clouds, that move,
 Touch'd by the blush of rosy-finger'd Love:
 The ruddy goddesses of the light new-born 115
 Unbars the gates, and ushers in the Morn.

AND now, emerging from his nightly reign,
 The misty mountain, and the blue-ey'd main,
 Sire of the SUMMER gilds yon azure way,
 And, vigorous, rushes to begin the day. 120
 His quivering rays o'er hills and forests, far,
 Gleam through the glades, to tell his coming car:
 He peeps the powerful smile!—now half convey'd—
 Now his broad visage clears the rocky shade.
 Ere Fancy speak, the faded stars absorb 125
 The drowning virtues of his brighter orb:
 A mellow lustre gives the beauteous gleam,
 In streams unsullied from his youthful beam.
 Earth shines in radiant meekness all around,
 That lights her dew-drops, twinkling on the ground. 130

O MAY I ne'er, for sloth luxurious, shun
 Those fragrant blessings of the morning SUN!

Source of Existence ! animating Shine !
Each beauty's from thee, and each glory's thine :
Great Lamp of Day ! whose ever-cheering light 135
Dispels the horrors of the gloomy night :
The dread afsassin scouts, with shame, away,
And Guilt's uncover'd at thine honest ray.
Nature all-hails thee, bounteous Spark divine !
And pays her homage at thy dewy shrine. 140
Ev'n now the woodland's universal throng
Swell the loud chorus, and to thee's their song.
The general hymn begins, attun'd to pay
Their earliest tributes to the new-born Day.
Fresh bleat the hills ; the lowing vales resound, 145
That rise to pasture on their herbag'd ground :
And, frequent, nibbling on their commons free,
They, conscious, glance their meaning praise to thee.
The insect nations, at thy fostering noon,
Quit the dominion of the chiller moon, 150
And, springing, flutter to thy kindly rays,
To hum thee thanks amid th' inspiring blaze.
Now, as I rustle thro' the twining shade,
Or, musing, wander by the forest glade,
From ev'ry leaf the teasing people stray, 155
And swarms, fast-following, at my temples prey.

At thy approach the very winds attend,
 In court obsequious to proclaim thee, friend:
 And grateful fan thee, as, in gentlest jar,
 They breezy-whisper round thy fiery car. 160
 Without thine all-exhilarating store,
 Life's lazy tubes had warm'd this heart no more——
 I seek thy shine—I court the charming gleam,
 And feel thy MAKER smile on every beam.
 My languid soul a thrilling pleasure gains, 165
 And life-blood hurries thro' the bluish veins!

LIFE of creation, in ten thousand forms!
 Thou checkst and softenst surly Winter's storms.
 Had righteous Vengeance but forbid thy sway——
 Hadst thou, O SUN! deny'd the living ray, 170
 Not one least beauty had these landships worn,
 But dark Oblivion dull'd the lightsome Morn.
 These playful flocks, and tuneful tribes on earth,
 Had instant-shiver'd into tenfold death:
 I too had, seiz'd in every limb, been bound 175
 A stiffen'd carcase on my kindred ground;
 Nor ever risen from my couch this day,
 Stretcht out with mortals in eternal clay.
 With petrifying frost and icy chains,
 Worlds would have blister'd into brazen plains: 180

Sunk into Chaos, would thy spheres have lain,
 And wild Confusion sought her old domain:
 Earth, unattracted, in their suns had burn'd,
 And other systems from their axles turn'd!

CEASE, flattering Muse! forbear th' unhallow'd lays,
 Nor more the Creature than his MAKER praise:
 Wouldst thou from Persia learn the rites divine*,
 Or stoop, deluded, at an idol's shrine?
 Canst thou, proud SUN! deny the smiling morn,
 Or boast of beams and majesty thine own?
 No, no, poor spark of UNCREATED LIGHT!
 Faint emanation of the GODHEAD's might!
 What, though we're nourish'd by your kindly fire,
 You're but the servant of the GENERAL SIRE,
 Who bade thine urns with fluid gold to glow,
 Or tip'd each arrow in thy silver bow?
 HE form'd—directs you—should HE cease to smile,
 You, daunted, veil your weeping brow the while:
 Or, at HIS nod your every beam destroy'd,
 You sink, that moment, to a nameless void!
 And were the planets, with your boasted throne,
 Earth,—your whole system—into nothing torn,

* The Persians worshipped the rising sun.

Eye peopled space to infinite—and *all*
Creates no chasm in the MIGHTY WHOLE!

YON Sun, just risen, shoots forth his meekest ray, 205
Unlike the hot and sultry beams of Day:
While honey'd gums from every leaflet smoke,
And manna* glitters on the dewy oak.
The foggy lawn, the reeky water pours,
Its vap'ry tribute in aërial showers: 210
A thousand mists forsake the freshen'd ground,
That mingle in the dun horizon round.
The landskip laughs—the dim-seen river's clear,
The hills, the forests, smiling all, appear.
The brilliant gems, that stud the glistening plain, 215
Teem to the skies, and seek the clouds again.
Yes, gems! Cleora, at the dazzling view,
Might think the dew-drop has the diamond's hue.
Methinks she'd snatch th' illusive pomp for gain,
When, lo! the phantom's from the parched plain! 220
Such, and so transient, what the world enjoys;
Pride, beauty, riches, vanities, and toys:
We grasp at shadows, and we build in air,
For all our treasure's but the brow of Care!

* What the rustics call a *honey-fall*.

THE Rosy Race, on flaunting stems upborne, 225
Unfolds her blushes to the rival'd Morn :
Wet with the dew of night her tresses lay,
And promise, yet, to live another day.
Go, Queen of Blossoms! to my Phillis fair,
Breathe out thy life beneath her honour'd care; 230
And, when her heaving bosom's made thy tomb,
In silence whisper beauty's transient bloom :
Tell her, would she in worth substantial shine,
'Tis virtue forms the beauteous maid, divine.

SOON as the heat of Sol's refulgent ray 235
Has dry'd the grafs a sultry SUMMER's day,
The rural youths and village nymphs appear
To cull the bounties of the coming year.
Forth steps the master-swain, and, foremost, throws
The mangled herbage into russet rows: 240
Blithe-following then, a various-tutor'd train
Clear the fair burden from the busy plain.
With forks and clowns the lusty hay-cock towers,
Pil'd from the pillage of the wither'd flowers.
And as they toil, and trail the rakes around, 245
Green-sweeps the surface of the new-shorn ground ;
Till, heap'd each produce of the vernal suns,
From fence to fence the vivid verdure runs.

Smells thick on smells perfume the love-sick Day,
 As drunken Zephyr wafts the breath of hay. 250
 'Tis nought but frolic through the jovial dale,
 The catch loud-bursting, and the shepherd's tale,
 To help the ploughman with his homely strains,
 Responsive Echo strikes the distant plains.
 White-stream the sleeves, and sweating brows display 255
 The dun complexion of their kindred hay.
 The cottage maid, while drops the fiery brine,
 Browns her bare bosom in the scorching shine.
 Fainting, oft see them sink to flowery ease,
 And catch the breathings of the frigid breeze. 260
 Mean time, shak'd gently o'er the velvet plain,
 With crest fair-nodding, rolls the loaded wain;
 The willing steers their kind assistance yield,
 And, easy toiling, crop the juicy field.
 Th' exulting farmer eyes the smelling store, 265
 When sleeping Nature can produce no more;
 His fatten'd ox, in midst of Plenty's cheer,
 Owns the kind produce of the bounteous year!

BEHOLD the labours of another swain,
 Industrious-sweating on the cultur'd plain; 270
 Where, heap'd in artful composition, lies
 The melted limestone, heating as it dies,

He fills the smoking car, and, wide around,
 Dusts a fit deluge on the whitened ground.
 Lost in a cloud, the vapoury atoms fly 275
 Round the parch'd bosom, and the smarting eye:
 Sing'd the rude vestment on his shoulder hung,
 And the lip quivers to the thirsty tongue.
 Some pile the shaggy turf, unfruitful, poor,
 Par'd from the surface of the heathy moor: 280
 Soon mock destruction meets the stranger's gaze,
 Whole fields in flames, and ether on a blaze:
 The country's hid in smoke, and stench profound,
 While sooty columns black the forest round.
 Till at dry eve the wither'd rubbish burn'd, 285
 'Tis hopeful ashes, and to fatness turn'd.

THE swain, thus mindful of his fallow toil,
 With ceaseless labour plies the thwarted soil;
 Till its rough surface, whitening clean, display
 Its clods well-temper'd in the SUMMER's ray. 290
 What thus can't honest Industry attain?
 What bounds his hopes, or circumscribes his gain?
 As oft the peasant stalks the pleasing round,
 He feels his heart with future autumns bound.

TELLS you, this picture, who the moral find, 295
 What culture's needed for a fruitful mind?
 Then too yon field, with noxious thistles stor'd
 That feels no tillage from a sluggard lord,
 Presents those weeds that foul the human heart,
 And kill fair virtue in th' infected part. 300
 Can he, who sleeps in drony sloth the day,
 When wakeful peasants catch the withering ray,
 And leaves th' unbroken soil, his charge, to shoot
 A waste of rubbish from the tangling root,
 Expect to gather from his heartless plains 305
 An equal harvest with laborious swains?

YE GENEROUS BANDS*! the glorious task pursue
 To give protection to the sacred plough:
 And, though unable to attempt your dues,
 Accept the tribute of a VILLAGE MUSE! 310
 Still she knows Britons will resign to fame
 A project worthy of the British name.
 Go, then, ye Patriots! *teach* the listening swain
 His fields to manage to the greatest gain:
 And learn the untaught husbandman to cause 315
 His crops t' improve by philosophic laws:

* The Board of Agriculture, Agricultural Societies, &c.

What soils the season or a fallow bear;
 To spread his marl; and suit the changeful year.
 As Nature's better'd by what Art prepares,
 So Agriculture's nourish'd with your cares. 320
 The rustic thus, obedient to your rules,
 Shall, musing, turn his every grove to schools.
 What! can't the produce of a grateful soil,
 Abounding harvests, recompence the toil?
 Yes—but, behold! the laurel'd prize appears 325
 For useful merit, or experienc'd years;
 To stimulate th' industrious clown to zeal,
 In Plenty's increase for the public weal:
 T' incite Ancilla to be faithful, long,
 Nor serve, capricious, with a scolding tongue: 330
 In servant duties all the nymphs reclaim,
 When seen yon pastures—for now *she's* a dame.
 These the same track of still ambition seek,
 Till fame and affluence for an *husband* speak.

YES! go, YE PATRIOTS! *tempt* the list'ning swain 335
 His fields to manage to the greatest gain.
 Much yet awaits your parent hands t'engage,
 And bid brisk Commerce baffle Famine's rage:
 Those endless heaths, uncultivated, poor;
 The barren waste that browns the rushy moor; 340

With useless commons, never seen but bare,
 Nor since Noah's deluge knew the brightening share,
 That should the jaws of sweeping WAR no more
 Demand his tribute of Britannia's gore:
 And other millions of her sons she saw
 In swarming villas learn the needed plough,
 Still, while the State defy'd external harms,
 She'd nurse with plenty, for she'd give them farms.

COULD she look backward to primæval times,
 When Albion's number'd with the barbarous climes,
 What contrast strikes th' exulting Muse, to view
 Yon fields, then subject to the Gothic crew!
 'Twas then those plains were desolation, all,
 For endless forests overspread the whole:
 Whose ancient sons ne'er felt the pruner's charm,
 Nor bow'd Submission to the woodman's arm.
 Spontaneous sprung the briar and the thorn,
 And wove the darken'd wilderness forlorn:
 Here rovd the Genius of the woods, defil'd,
 And sylvan monsters nourish'd for his child;
 Whose dens gap'd ghastly in the hollow'd earth,
 Blood, Bones, were tenants—but the guard was Death.
 Forth prowld the banded wolves each secret way,
 And grinn'd destruction to the bleeding prey.

Nightly the jaws of famish'd thousands gave
The voice that echo'd thro' the trembling cave.
Here, too, the human robber lay conceal'd,
Whose heart the thirst of mad oppression steel'd:
The fellest he! on dire intent he sprung,
Or lur'd his brother with a dæmon's tongue.
Man then—if men they seem'd—ne'er learn'd to feel
The sweets of home, or taste the wholesome meal.
Unseemly wretch! from sordid hut he drew
The bloody club, to join a ruffian crew:
Thro' woods and thickets, clad in skins, he bore
His pillage crude, and drank the mangled gore;
He found not yet to start the glorious deed,
To clip the fleece; or tame the useful steed;
To rear the pompous dome; in commerce train
The nations round; and occupy the main.
He knew not yet the SEASONS, nor had found
To trust his handful to the faithful ground:
But liv'd in sloth the careless SUMMER's day,
And pin'd the winter on his husky prey;
Or roam'd with shivering tribes the forest o'er,
To feast his hunger on the hunted boar.
'Tis true, mock Freedom sanction'd all misrule,
And nurs'd her sons in simple Nature's school;

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But was it freedom in a Reason's sight,
 The Sword of Justice, with the People's Right? 390
 Ah! no—'twas such, where black Rebellion brings
 The scourge tyrannic of *plebeian* kings:
 As nourish'd rapine, nor protected man,
 But shar'd possessions as oppressors can.
His be the fields to-day; to-morrow *mine*; 395
 Kill me next moment, and the plunder's *thine*.
 No laws protect me, is it freedom, say,
 Who's free t' enjoy them but a single day?
 Such wast thou Albion—let Britannia see!
 Such is the state of Nature, never free. 400
 Short-sighted mortals! your wild systems such
 Call riches equal—but the thought's too much!
 Support by false Philosophy the plan,
 Your scheme's for angels,—not for erring man!
 Fallen, each passion blind to Reason's light, 405
 He swerves, continual, from the side of right:
 Subordination *will* exist,—and, *then*,
 There *must* be rulers o'er the sons of men,

Lo! while the world in meek submission kneel,
 From warlike Gallia scuds the Roman keel: 410
 Albion's white cliffs attract the spumy helm,
 And the world's mistress awes another realm,

Immortal Cæsar comes ! his banners play,
 And veteran legions join barbarian fray.
 Methinks I see the painted Britons* wield 415
 The crushing sabre at the Roman shield:
 Or shower the feather'd arrow, dipt in gore,
 While Rome's tall pinnace staggers from the shore.
 Presage of glory in succeeding times !
 Spark of the Genius when they scorn'd his crimes ! 420
 Perhaps yon plains have borne the Roman car,
 And hosts with faulchions flaming from afar—
 Perhaps they saw the mighty conflict wage,
 When slaughter'd armies fed the victor's rage—
 Perhaps ev'n they have drunk the blood of all 425
 Those ancient heroes, and the pride of Gaul.—
 'Twas big with Britain's weal—her golden age !—
 Hence is she dated in historic page,
 The rude barbarian sees the brazen line,
 And deems the polish'd Roman is divine. 430
 Empire succeeds, to blunt the savage goad,
 And Law's stern front presents the civil code:
 Freedom's fair bulwarks !—next the sages wait,
 And Rome's grey senate forms the British state.

* The Picts.

Till, by degrees, with many a struggle, came 435
The firm foundation of her future fame.

THE savage now no more,—from caves she springs,
And Arts and Commerce wave their golden wings.
Useless ere now, the mighty forests reel,
And, sounding, echo to the builder's steel. 440
While, fair-proportion'd, swells the palace nigh,
With Doric columns to th' approving sky.
Lin'd thick with streets, the peopled city towers,
And rocks are hollow'd by mechanic powers:
The square, whose weight would human hundreds pain, 445
Swings in the tackle of th' obedient crane.
Thy stately spires the shepherd's hut have known,
And thou, proud London! hadst the corner-stone:
Then, Thames! thine arches from their faithful bores
Reach'd to shake hands, and link'd, the parted shores. 450
Cities with cities busy Traffic sees
The well-pav'd turnpike mingle, as they please.

BUT could the world, much less their native claim,
Bound mad Ambition to the British name?
Necessity, but more the thirst of Glory, train 455
Genius to ask the empire of the main.

First something skims th' experimental bay ;
Next the light boat ; and next the rowers play.
Fir'd at the sight, she brings, celestial Truth,
The finish'd vessel to the river's mouth ; 460
That steers by young Philosophy, her guide,
The round of nations on the faithless tide*.

SOLE fount of freedom, GOVERNMENT ! from you,
Peace, Plenty, Commerce, every blessing ! grew.
At your kind smile the prying artist came 465
To toil, rewarded by the voice of Fame ;
Form'd the fine engine ; spun the useful fleece ;
And brought the manners of refining Greece.
By you protected, INDUSTRY appears !
(Else had he linger'd in eternal fears, 470
Nor taught the nations at his charm to rise,
For barbarous ruffians snatch'd the golden prize !)
Necessity's rough child ! he chose you king,
To brood his labours at your fostering wing :
Then boldly bid the willing plough be there, 475
And shove the woodlands from the shining share.

* The Author certainly goes not beyond the limits of *poetical fiction*, if, through the love he bears his country, he ascribes the invention of navigation to her sons.

Fair Science dawn'd propitious to that morn,
 When *selfish* Union saw the *social* born :
 Some bard dictated to old Chaucer's tongue,
 And Genius flourish'd as the Muses sung.
 Thus Britain grew in civilizing bloom,
 And saw the ruin of her parent, Rome.

480

LET the rude clangour of the trumpet cease !
 Goodwill to mortals ! and on earth be peace !
 Peace universal smile—the world be still——
 And types prophetic all your truths fulfil !
 The darken'd veil, the mystic scroll, no more,
 Cloudless now shine the great design ye bore.
 See ! in what glorious majesty she flies,
 A form celestial, brighter than the skies !
 With smile benign she cuts th' illumin'd wind,
 And seems to pity for the human kind :
 One hand the olive wreath, whose finger rays
 Th' important volume that her left displays.
 Earth is the spot her heavenly accents greet,
 Whilst Eden blossoms underneath her feet !
 'Tis blest RELIGION comes ! reveal'd from GOD
 To light blind mortals up th' empyreal road :
 Britain receives her too, with bleeding zeal,
 The meek-ey'd guardian of her surest weal.

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With open arms to her, she spurns the stain
 Of Superstition, and the Druid fane.
 Nature's religion, but the smother'd flame,
 To rapture kindles in the Christian's name.
 No longer kneeling at an idol's shrine,
 Religion wins her with a form divine.
 She gives the rule of life—th' immortal sigh——
 And tells what duties knit the social tie :
 Implants fair Hope ; and gives the grasping Fear ;
 And learns the weeping Charities the tear.
 O ! glorious era ! Britain own'd the boon,
 And spread and flourish'd to perfection soon,
 Taught to consult the happiness of all,
 A *part politic* serve the *subject whole* :
 Bid hawk-ey'd Justice in her senates wait,
 And rear'd the pillars of her *triform* state :
 The test of ages ! and the world's amaze !
 The scourge of traitors, when she's Envy's gaze.
 Yet is she dup'd to bear despotic sway,
 Meanly-submissive, or a tyrant's prey ?
 Striking Corruption at a patriot stroke,
 She nobly hisses at the galling yoke.
 Wisely thus watchful of Oppression's hour,
 She trusts but proxies with the key of pow'r ;

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Stern Justice shields the injur'd head of all, 525
And equal cheers the cottage as the hall,
Where Liberty inspires the peasant's gains,
And Laws protect what Industry obtains!

Just let the Muse that frugal spot explore,
Green'd with each product of the kitchen-store. 530
Thick in fair files, within a grove of trees,
On firm supporters cling the Marrow Peas:
The Beans shoot up, and swell the podded gem,
Their peaceful neighbours on a stouter stem.
Various the ripening vegetables crowd, 535
Their leaves an arbour, and their fruits for food,
Twin'd over head, see promis'd Autumn come
With Apple smooth, and paint the green-four Plum.
Nor to the surface be the search confin'd,
In earth deep-rooted, is a numerous kind: 540
Where the red Carrot darts her loosen'd way,
In rows white-bursting the Potatoes lay;
Just to keep soul within her prison'd door,
Oft the sole refuge of the hungry poor!
Here too in beds the Olitory plumes 545
A frizzled race, and sheds their mix'd perfumes.
Health, balmy-finger'd, ever-tending, showers
Her antidotes of medicinal powers.

Did fever'd mortals but consult the charm,
Each slighted plant exudes a nectar'd balm. 550

While SUMMER heats opprest the vital spring,
The wholesome herb my cold collation bring,
Nicely collected from the teeming fields,
As HEAVEN design'd and genuine Nature yields.
To feast with Nature shall her sons disdain? 555
Or has she, lavish, spread her greens in vain?
Red thro' the leaves the crimson Berry plays,
And peeps and ripens in the courted blaze;
A clustering race! of growth maturely young
With bleeding juice to pierce the pamper'd tongue. 560
Low creeps the pimpled Strawberry, and, won,
Droops with soft coyness to the radiant Sun.
The plumpy Cherry, deeply-blushing all,
Turns her long start, and wooes the warming wall.

What tho' in *curses* Nature groans confess'd! 565
Thro' MERCY half the sentence is revers'd.
HEAVEN kind-relent'd at her children's tear,
And still smiles blessings on the flitting year,
With such nice care, that longing SUMMER's noon
Brings Autumn's late anticipated boon 570

Of timely fruits.—To smoothe the rugged scenes,
E'en wasted Winter has his share of greens.

MARK round each cot, and search the village gloom,
Each matron's garden's prodigal of bloom.
What various stores of temperance are *these*, 575
Of innocence, of labour, and of ease !
The food of Health, ere Luxury appear'd,
And, hid in snakes, her syren standard rear'd.
Milk was the meal, their dainties, and their choice,
For homely hunger was but Nature's voice. 580
The salutary herb ne'er saw the bowl
In ambush lurking to the staggering soul.
Thus nurs'd, a race of men, long-liv'd, and strong,
Were hardy warriors, and a toilsome throng :
Compar'd with whom this latter age, you'll find 585
The manly giant, and a dwarfish kind !
Now not enough to ravage India o'er,
And traffic treasures from the farthest shore :
To glut *made* appetites with plunder'd spoils,
And cates superfluous from a thousand soils : 590
These not enough—the human species groan,
Shackled, enslav'd by brothers of their own !

BUT still the dairy has delicious treats,
 Uncloying sauceage in its simpler sweets,
 To rustic households, and the village dame, 595
 Whose guileless bosoms scorn the needful claim
 Of China plant—who spurn th' oppressive gain,
 That blood-stain'd produce of the sugar-cane!
 See, when at eve the ready kine stand still,
 With teats distended near th' accustom'd hill: 600
 Their udders empty to each streaming pap,
 And give their tribute to the milkmaid's lap.
 Each hobbling matron comes, with honest brow,
 And well-scour'd piggin, to demand her cow,
 The nurse of all her family—her sow's*, 605
 Of shock, or pufs, her grandson, and her spouse.

YET is it always thus, when iron lords
 Stint the bare mansion to their hungry boards:
 Nor leave one little field, an envied store!
 To hug fair Plenty to the cottage poor? 610
 When farms to farms are laid, the parish thrown
 To load with wealth some undeserving clown?
 An helpless family submissive-wait,
 In rags imploring at the lordling's gate:

* "A grunter in the sty."

The cottager's a vassal to his frown,
 And toils, to merit but a scanty boon.
 No cow's his lot!—the pitcher'd wretches stand
 To ask their dole from Charity's cold hand,

O! THEN, ye feeling few! a nobler train!
 Give *equal* blessings to the toiling swain:
 Or bid the worthy cottager demand
 A RENTED portion of his *master's* land:
 A single field, his whole ambition's proof!
 Would usher plenty to his frugal roof.
 To husband this, his leisure hours allow,
 Nor hurt the state, nor stop another's plough.
Yon cultur'd border swells the useful root
 Of various food—and *here* his orchards shoot:
 By Art divided, *there* his harvests grow;
Here waves the meadow to befriend his cow.
 Do hungry walls breed discontented hate?
 'Tis Justice join'd to POLICY of STATE.
 Where's now the clamorous poor? each smiling cot
 Reaps sparing plenty from the prided spot.
 A numerous tribe of flouted brethren, *then*,
 Would share life's comforts, and be seen like men.
 Sure, gracious HEAVEN the useful Cow design'd
 An universal blessing to mankind.

NOT that the Muse would lay such *rebel rules*,
 As teach the mad equality of fools: 640
 Or couch that treason, of the wise the scorn,
 "That all by Nature are to riches born."
 Base snares to Freedom! Anarchy's your due!
 To her be *lost* Philanthropy in view.
 Long, Britain, long may all thy nobles claim 645
 The wealth and honours of the patriot name:
 And, GOOD AS WELL AS GREAT, (since riches fall)
 Still studious—reach that happiness to all!

YES, CONSTABLE! with feelings of the man,
 Thy liberal soul inspir'd the Muse's plan. 650
 She saw, triumphant, how thy hamlets vie
 In rural plenty and domestic joy:
 What swain, well-meaning or industrious found,
 But farms life's comforts on thy tillage ground?
 What veteran rustic, honest-hearted, thrown 655
 From the moss cot, his grandsire call'd his own,
 Goes, weeping, from that home and grateful cows,
 To pine a pauper with an aged spouse?
 Blest he! who scorns to screw the utmost groat
 In vile exaction from a thread-bare coat: 660
 Thrice blest be he! who lends each home its land,
 He sees an hamlet foster'd from his hand:

Envied the swain ! whose better stars afford
 His sons, in turn, to call the man his lord !
 Each peopled cottage eats the DONOR's bread, 665
 And lisping tongues ask blessings on his head !

IN these rank days Humanity how rare !
 The poor—fell Avarice grinds him to despair.
 Some yeoman, proud-imperious, curls the frown,
 And plays the tyrant to his brother clown ; 670
 While Pity hears the cottager complain,
 His lot unequal to his neighbour's gain ;
 That from stout droves to careless swine shall fall
 MILK, which his children would a blessing call.
 Trustees of Heaven ! to steward well its store, 675
 Be crown'd with blessings of rejoicing poor !

WHENCE to the Muse this bold digression springs ?
 Will Fortune's darlings pardon what she sings ?
 O ! think, with her, each hamlet father sues, 680
 Nor call it daring in a VILLAGE MUSE !
 But pleads she, careless of the burning day,
 Tho' mounting Phœbus asks the vagrant lay ?
 For, see, wheel'd upwards to the zenith far,
 Th' horizon blushes at his parting car :

OR, A POEM ON SUMMER.

39

The melted air admits the blending beam,
 And earth's illum'd in universal gleam.
 Deep-fring'd with gold, the sunny clouds display
 Their silver fleeces o'er th' etherial way :
 All Fancy's forms the crushing sluices wear,
 By turns light-skimming, and by turns too near,
 Now, intercepting the quick day, they run,
 And drink the flashing torrent from the Sun ;
 Whose brow, ere this, pours wide the delug'd rays,
 And reigns the tyrant in meridian blaze.
 No cloud obstructs the empyrean green,
 Or stains the blueness of its azure sheen ;
 Stretch'd out one purest mantle is the sky,
 And bashful Luna hides her blunted eye.
 In vain to lift my streaming eyes I hope,
 With hands close-tunnel'd, to the fiery cope :
 The blinded pupil, with too dazzling pow'rs,
 Quits the weak optics for the shaded bow'rs :
 Still, still confus'd, I see but sunbeams dance,
 Nor catch one image with my wonted glance !
 If to the earth I strain th' uneasy gaze,
 Heat, strong-reflected, from the pavement plays.
 Wide ether glows !—while, from the SUMMER'S SIRE,
 The streams are tepid, and the fields on fire.

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The sick'ning flocks far shun the nibbled hills,
 And in sweet umbrage suck their freshening rills : 710
 While on his new-shorn flank's too-cumbrous loans
 The out-stretch'd wether 'mong his kindred moans.
 Here, mid vast swarms of trooping insects, soon
 Its mangle contagious breathes th' infected Noon.
 And while, unconscious, on their faithless plain 715
 The harmless people catch their general bane,
 The lurking fly-blow quickens, moist, within,
 The pungent maggot o'er th' incrusted skin :
 Till the live surface, spreading thick the groin,
 Deep-boring, riots on the martyr'd loin. 720

WITH tail erect, the frantic steer disdains
 Each fence, and hurries from his empire plains :
 The stinging gad-bee sucks the vengeful pore,
 Which, as he switches, fastens but the more.
 Foaming, he rushes thro' the broken dells, 725
 And conquer'd fury into madness swells :
 Now, as he swifter brushes thro' the shades,
 Sand scoops his hoof—he bellows by the glades.
 The wondering herd he sees, and, meaning, sends
 A louder roar, to join his vacant friends. 730
 Now laves the stopping brook, his sides to cool,
 And, panting, plunders in the puddled pool.

But here his folly with misfortune grows
To greater evils, in his horse-leech foes ;
The yellow fiend, his fittest course to spy, 735
Sails, grimly-joyous, to the bleeding thigh.—
'Tis vain to shake—he fills himself with gore,
And stains with blood the purpled surface o'er.

THE lather'd steed, forgetful of his toil,
Stops the keen plough-share in the sluggish soil: 740
His only task to lash the smarting fly ;
Shake the loose hide; or shut the guarded eye;
To snort replies—his head and knees he stains
With swarms, fast crushing mid the jingling reins :
Till disentangled by the tiring swain, 745
He seeks his pasture and the ponds again :
Or idly stamps, with ceaseless foot, the day,
And mopes, oak-shaded from th' inclement ray.

THE trav'ller broils beneath the sultry beam,
And slacks his journey by some winnowing stream: 750
Breathless he tumbles to the cooling shed,
And the moss pillow at his fainting head,
Brings kind refreshment to his wearied frame,
Till length'ning shades the cooler hours proclaim.

How pure the air, as waving willows crowd, 755
That stoop t' embrace him in a sylvan shroud!
How grateful thus to scoop the rillet near,
Greens to his eye, and music at his ear!

MUTE are the jovial dales, and Labour stands
With tools no longer in his horny hands: 760
The flaming Sun, when, scarce declining, prone
He floods a look around his dazzling throne,
Rocks the dull ploughboy, as he, careless, dims
The sun-burnt eyelids, and unjoins his limbs.
The lounging shepherd yonder quits the plain, 765
And hies him homeward thro' the chesnut lane;
Behind his dog, thick-panting, foams to fling
Far out his tongue, and laps at every spring.

THE feather'd flocks forbear the wonted lay,
And shun the rigours of redundant Day: 770
With one consent, they pierce the glimmering glade
To dark recesses of the mid-wood shade:
All is deep silence, as they dumb-complain,
Save the parch'd surface of the rustling plain,
Where, chirping, greets the grasshopper his dale, 775
And, ceaseless, thrills his melancholy tale.

There, sister-like, the butterfly would spring,
 At Nature's breath to flap the painted wing:
 Her boasted being, but a SUMMER's day,
 Each flower she kisses, and completes her stay.
 Thus flaunts in fashions the coquettish fair,
 A youth of folly, with an insect's care:
 Till life's meridian from her toilet flies,
 She worthless flutter'd, unlamented dies!

780

YE Genii, haunting by the sylvan rill,
 Conduct me, gasping, unto MAXWELL's vill*:
 To dark recesses; or to breezy glades;
 Serpentine alleys; and embowering shades.
 Thus, leaf-capt, hide me from the fiery hours
 In green plantations and sequester'd bowers.
 Where dance yond waters to the golden beam,
 The little Naiads sport upon the stream:
 Soon as yon trout the skimming emmet spy'd,
 He, dripping, leapt above the circling tide.
 Health seems to tingle thro' the swifter veins,
 As Fancy hurries to yon secret plains,
 To part their crystal with a swimmer's aim,
 Plunge from the brink, and bathe my fervid frame!

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* EVERINGHAM, one of the country seats of W. H. M. CONSTABLE, Esq.

A SPLENDID dome thro' every vista swells,
Whose fair blue roof 'midst elegancy dwells : 800
Points this avenue to the tripping deer ?
And skip the Fauni of the forest here ?
Swift-fledg'd Idea, and gay Fancy hail
Yon hoary fronts, the tenants of the dale :
Perhaps their sires, in midst of Gallic broils, 805
Refresh'd with shade the mighty Cæsar's toils.
The Muse, e'en slighting gaudy Maia's bloom,
Devoutly courts the solitary gloom.
Some the long date of centuries have told,
Scarce mouldering yet, magnificently old ! 810
There leans a trunk, and gives a thought sublime,
That all things hasten to the brink of time :
What tho' he flourish'd with increasing bloom
When many a master crumbled in the tomb ?
Just a green branch returning springs bestow — 815
He yields his bosom to th' insulting daw.
Here, shatter'd, pines a monument of age,
The bolt of thunder, and the lightning's rage.
And near him stoops and totters to the gale
An ancient sylvan of the hallow'd vale : 820
That, canker'd, muttering to the howlet's lay,
Points the stunt arms in venerable grey !

THESE, proud to grace the forest and the plain,
 Till Time shall nurse them for the public gain,
 Would prouder then in British triumphs roar,
 And leave her vallies to protect her shore:
 Methinks I hear th' inglorious veteran sigh,
 When streaming navies all the world defy:
 Or drop an hulk to see a brother, slain,
 Ride round the world for conquests on the main! — 830
 Welcome, ye corpses! and ye oaken bowers,
 Your vigour braces all my languid powers!
 Fresh Fancy whispers her ideas rife,
 And Time sits sweeter on the seats of life!

'Twas here these haunts of nature-painting views, 835
 Tun'd my first reed, and heard the VILLAGE MUSE:
 She too, in turn, as tributary strains,
 Breathes her best wishes on these tranquil plains. —
 Witness, then, Want! half-smiling Misery! say,
 This the best blessing every Muse can pray, — 840
 That Poverty's bleak hut may never mourn
 Succeeding patterns of WINFRIDA gone:
 Like Charity herself, industrious bent
 To search the widow and the sick man's tent;
 To feast deserving Want, not heard complain;
 And clothe the shoulders of the shivering swain: 845

To sudden cause each grateful heart to burn,
And scatter blessings where the footsteps turn:
No bigot sect—no partial native's frown—
For Britain's equal in a Scotia's boon! 850

FROM day to day as thus the candent car
Of Phœbus flashes to that baneful star*,
And rolls, with growing influence o'er the plains
Of torrid ether, into long domains,
Earth, deep-distracted from her surface, yawns, 855
And Nature saddens as her offspring groans.
Freed from the rigours of the tyrant Day,
She sighs for solace to the lunar ray:
But, as the breakings of the Morning leave
Her wings light sprinkled in the dews of Eve, 860
SIRE of the SUMMER, ere the shades are spun
To fling their curtains to the sleeping Sun,
Bursts from the glowing chambers of the skies,
And coolness, dropping, with the twilight flies.

SPLIT the white roads, a cloud of dust shoots thence 865
Its pois'nous columns o'er the faded fence;

* The dog-star.

Low moans the drudging ox—his own toils choke
 His nostrils, bound beneath the straining yoke :
 His heart-strings faint—his flagging tongue demands
 The instant streams, or foams among the sands ! 879
 Nature's wide range presents a dismal shade,
 And Vegetation lacks her wonted aid :
 The blushing glories of the vales around,
 Shrunk in rude havoc o'er the gaping ground,
 With beauties tarnish'd and neglected, lie, 875
 As weeping flowerets hang their heads, and die,
 Yon fair profusion in the woodland scenes,
 Now scorching ether taints their browning greens ;
 From Nature's lip is lock'd the streaming sky,
 Whose clouds their fatness to the fields deny. 880
 Creation mourns—the valley's fruitful rills,
 Fed from the fountains of the bubbling hills,
 With feeble now, and soon contracted force,
 Faint-murmuring on, forsake their wonted course,
 The shallow brook displays the yellow sands, 885
 And near its banks the thirsty heifer stands,

THE plaintive rustic pours the sluggish pray'r,
 Nor knows all Nature is the GODHEAD's care :
 Whole hamlets gravely bid their sages find,
 When chang'd the moon, or whither points the wind : 890

No fleece can sally thro' the riding sky,
But HEAVEN's thought list'ning to a mortal's cry.

REBELLIOUS ashes! shall your Maker shower
His unthank'd blessings every added hour,
And you but own HIM when you *think* ye pray 895
For misus'd favours in Affliction's day?

THE drought sets deeper in, and, bleaching, dens
A wider fissure in the juiceless fens.
Drunk is each drop, the SUMMER's thirst to cool,
And bak'd the surface of the blackening pool; 900
Its finny sons, when flown the latest flood,
Are chain'd for ever in the sapless mud.
Piteous, behold the writhing eel, half-spent,
Fain to desert his native element;
Now gape in sullen gaze—life's effort vain, 905
He clasps his brothers of the fetid plain!
Burnt with a double dearth, the languid steer
Asks a due tribute from the labour'd year:
Th' ungrateful year denies his honest toil,
For short and scanty is the wither'd soil, 910
Stiff are his hungry jaws—diseases prey,
And bloody urine* drains the vital stay.

* A common distemper in the summer among cattle.

Ah! shepherds, calling for the leaden strain,
 Your dumbly-patient innocents complain:
 Nor lack they streams alone—the sun-burnt mead 915
 Forbids the little of their temperate feed.

THE humbled rustic, half-despondent, wails
 His cow, yet grazing in the fearful vales:
 And, Art 'gainst Nature studious-toiling, brings
 His bucket, hoisted from the secret springs: 920
 Explor'd each stratum to the downward fount,
 He drains the bowels of the miry mount.
 His useful steeds, when spent the last year's corn,
 Chew the tough willow, or the griping thorn.
 The remnant herds can find no forage now, 925
 But the poor verdure of an oaken bough;
 Crush'd from the ragged branch by pitying swains,
 And heap'd for mis'ry on their dying plains.
 Hard fate! at last to craving cattle yield
 Th' untimely harvests of the bladed field: 930
 Man's keen distrefs! to save his useful kine,
 Gives his own food, for which he soon must pine.

'Tis on the evening of some faithless day,
 Foretold by sages of the village grey,

The winds breathe mildew from the chilling East, 935
 And scatter famine to th' autumnal feast.
 Nipt with destroying frosts, the parting hull
 Tempts a wing'd army from the ether full:
 An eggy atom soon their sons appear,
 A baneful race! to kill the hopeful year. 940
 These, eager-eating thro' the chaffless skin,
 Suck the milk essence from its soul within:
 The wither'd husk now swells no precious grain,
 But its deaf ear stands upright on the plain!

YE swains! read HIM in every line or page, 945
 Whose frown gave sanction to the Famine's rage:
 O listen!—wonder!—and adore that CHARM,
 Whose smile is plenty, and your fields HIS farm!
 Strew the quicklime, or smoke the blacken'd plain,
 Your care's no purpose, and your toils but vain, 950
 When Justice bursts from pleading Mercy's hand,
 In long-spar'd vengeance on a sinful land.
 Impute not then to secondary laws,
 To slips of Nature, as a general cause,
 What comes, commissioned at th' immediate nod, 955
 The aiming finger of, a wrathful GOD!
 Perhaps the remnant of the ravag'd vale
 May die for moisture, and with blighting fail:

Red and black dust in clammy canker gnaw,
And harvests ripen on untimely straw! 969

QUICK thro' the kingdom consternations fly,
And herald Interest sounds the panic lie.
The common rumours are, a failing store—
Of rising markets, with a call for more.
Some sad prognostic of the village sage 965
Compares the annals of remembring age.
Guileful to cheapen doubting Plenty's wares,
His iron grasp Monopoly prepares:
Arm'd with Oppression's gripe, a hated train
Of sly forestallers, from these sons of gain, 970
Expect the *lucky* day!—in league they go
T' enhance their coffers with the public wo:
These hoard the common stock, when thousands cry,
And at their option either live or die.
Ye lawless robbers! and your country's shame! 975
Well might she brand you with the traitor's name:
Say, shall your honest citizens, defy'd,
Sip but the channels of Oppression's tide?

Now burn the bosoms of the patriot few,
In search humane to find the golden clew 980

That bids the sympathetic soul not fear,
 But mock the tempest of the raging year.
These animate the drooping peasant's wail,
 To try the root where coying harvests fail :
These usher schemes how Temperance may fare, 985
 And barren Want be taught the means to spare :
These glorious shine, the Man with Pleasure's strife,
 And first retrench the luxuries of life.
 This truth they know, that, while a drony lord
 Swims in that honey, which himself ne'er stor'd, 990
 The toiling race, with indigence at home,
 Chew their lean morsels of the choking comb.

NOR be thy plan * forgotten of the Muse,
 Tho' least, not meanest of thy patriot views,
 O PITT! whose bark, mid envious Faction's hate, 995
 Braves in calm courage all the storms of state.
 Tho' young the Muse, she, lisping, learnt to sing
 Fear to her GOD, and honour to her KING!
 When Britain mourn'd, in blighting SUMMER's noon,
 The torch of Discord, and a Famine's frown, 1000
Thine threw the scandals of Presumption o'er,
 And bid the peasant ape the peer no more.

* The HAIR-POWDER TAX.

Thine said what toys set Industry aside,
 And struck, successful, at a nation's pride:
 For empty Folly, meanly strutting, saw 1005
 The loaf presented to the *powder'd* beau;
 Nor to themselves this good—th' exulting poor
 Supply'd his children with a nameless store,
 As Fancy strew'd at witching Fashion's shrine,
 When Rank and Meanness had no parting line. 1010
 That line was drawn, and social order ran,
 When *seemly* merit dignify'd the man.
 While useless Plenty with her thousands wait,
 Pride pays her tribute to support the state.

SHALL WAR, fell monster! fire the Muse's flame? 1015
 Her peaceful bias shudders at the name!
 She'd rather sing her song of peace, by far,
 Than paint in trophies the triumphal car.
 Nor long expects the day, HIS plighted word
 Shall snatch the helmet and the cruel sword, 1020
 And bid those gifts of vanquish'd hell prepare
 The reaper's sickle, and the ploughman's share!
 Consenting nations! crown the olive wreath,
 Let mutual kindness mutual kindness breathe:
 Unjealous interests, join the trusted hand, 1025
 When proxies bear the genius of each land:

Wide as the world may laughing Commerce reign,
And link each empire with a golden chain.
What each man's part in common good we call,
Such would each climate tally with the *whole*: 1939
Fears from no foe, would firm alliance soothe,
And mutual wants another's plenty smooth.
Then man, beyond his narrow sphere extoll'd,
Shares all the products of the ravish'd world:
What *one* as dainties, ever rare, enjoys, 1935
This finds them easy, and but counts them toys;
Each envies other his enjoyments, rife,
And luxury barter for the stay of life.
'Tis so, when Peace, in friendly sort explores,
The whisper'd wishes of unsever'd shores; 1940
But when sour Discord's horrid hand resumes
The shafts polluted of his crimson plumes,
Coy Commerce flies th' embroiling world too soon,
For her, to groan beneath a Famine's frown.
The clown, the shepherd, desolate those plains, 1945
Where once they reap'd the tribute of their pains:
The remnant rustic fears th' invading broil,
And sees no hopes for husbandry to toil.
Unpeopled cities, from the dreaded roars,
Seek the far lap of hospitable shores; 1950

And, without toiling or proportion'd care,
 Spend the scarce morsels of a stranger's fare :
 Whose all exhausted, is deny'd, in frowns,
 The wonted succours of commercial boons.
 Perhaps a Gallia, struggling to be free, 1055
 With zeal too hot, can't *moderation* see ;
 Breathes mad rebellion (less a slave before),
 To drench her vallies in her people's gore !
 Or is Polonia*, meanly-plunder'd, say,
 By tyrants shackled, whom she scorn'd t'obey ! 1060
 Her unsubmitting patriots, do they moan
 Her pristine grandeur into ruins thrown ?
 The sluggish nations, do they slight the call,
 When Freedom totters on her latest fall ?
 Her mangled plains, to heal the common wound, 1065
 Of rare abundance drain the kingdoms round :
 On Plenty's lap is haggard Famine born,
 Whose hands, that snatch'd it, hold her empty'd horn.

STILL shall the Muse pretend, in strains of wo,
 More feats to paint of meagre Famine's jaw ? 1070
 Then, as she sings, may trembling Fancy own
 How grandly dreadful is JEHOVAH's frown !

* Poland.

Mute are the sons of weeping Commerce now,
 And Ceres mourns her unrewarded plough :
 As wondering tongues the gloomy merchant meet, 1075
 The empty market saddens in each street :
 The voice of Joy and busy Traffic done,
 Loud-thundering murmurs thro' the forums run.
 Self-love purloining, what by craft she can,
 Each heart beats vengeance on th' engrosser's plan. 1080
 From hungry home, by yearning bowels led,
 A craving mother asks her children bread :
 What stops when hunger cannot find supplies ?
 With sudden burst the rebel riots rise !
 Contagion fires ! the gathering tumult swarms ! 1085
 And life's a forfeit, ere that hunger calms !
 Half-pitied ! half-detested !—judge, thou sage,
 Can Reason baffle lawless Nature's rage ?
 Hard is the fate Necessity demands !
 Stern the quick grasp the public peace commands ! 1090
 Say, will they listen unto Reason's call,
 Ere martial Vengeance, stimulated, fall ?
 Brother with brother urge the civil fight,
 And watchful legions shall parade the night ?
 Must life, sad thought ! secure the common-weal, 1095
 And frustrate Famine of his hungry meal ?

WHAT now avail the wealthy and the gay,
 The miser's money, and th' oppressor's prey?
 Ye grov'ling sons of wretched Earth! now tell,
 Can Riches purchase, when but HEAVEN can sell? 1100
 Or, can they hush you from that dying fear,
 The knell that frequent mutters in your ear?

THE Nation's humbled into public pray'r,
 If WRATH DIVINE may, supplicated, spare:
 By now, the arm of Legislation deals 1105
 His funds, made common, into equal meals:
 Mouths hardly tempted, 'less the portion's more,
 Faint-ask their *ounces* from the public store.
 STILL-RIGHTEOUS HEAVEN! 'tis death to him who dare
 Filch but one morsel for a famish'd share; 1110
 Or guileful claim, what sacred ties defend,
 The bit that cheers a brother or a friend:—
 The moment kills!—'twas Nature's dying call,
 To prison life within a longer wall.

SURE, there's no soul of potent Pleasure's train, 1115
 Who feels those pangs of universal pain,
 Lives the gay round, and, if at Wealth's expence,
 Disdains t' abate the luxuries of sense!

Grief and Despair, as hand in hand they go,
 The wailing crowds drink deep the dregs of Wo: 1120
 The bitter bread of Penury they plan,
 And bake their offals from the pasted bran.
 On killing husks the *wealthy poor* now pine,
 What once, disgustful, spurn'd the happier swine.
 Coarse, and yet scanty!—what a dainty more, 1125
 Than, watery gobbets! the potatoe poor?
 Death greedy riots, and triumphant reigns,
 And easy gluts depopulated plains.
 My Muse would faint, at sighing Sorrow's spring,
 Could she the scenes of desolation sing. 1130

Two Lovers, leaning but on heavenly sips,
 Press their last morsel to each others lips:
 'Tis near them spar'd for dearer self—they die,
 Each for that comfort, which they both deny!
 Here a fond mother, frantic in despair 1135
 As prattling tongues their wondering wants declare:
 For this one loaf her fearful bosom sighs,
 If all her substance can attain the prize!
 She meets her offspring quick, in tottering pace,
 And half a smile beams pleasure on her face: 1140
 'Tis all, untasted, to their portions giv'n,
 And Hope now leads the suppliant to heav'n.

First a hard struggle labours on her soul—
 Shall she *too* taste it, and survive their fall?—
 What!—see them die?—she tells of sleep to-day, 1145
 And forces life to leave its famish'd clay!
 Sweet innocents! in vain with artless tears ye steal,
 And ask those hands to give *another* meal:
 In vain to wake your dearest friend ye seek,
 And print your kisses on that livid cheek; 1150
 Ye too, in turns, emaciated, lie,
 A clinging group, to meet her in the sky:
 Your infant hands around her neck, soon rest
 A lifeless load upon her wither'd breast!

THESE and a thousand instances could shine 1155
 To paint the terrors of the SCOURGE DIVINE:
 When rebel cities, lash'd, have mourn'd for bread,
 And left not living to inter the dead.
 Say, have not some e'en snatch'd the nauseous *feast*.
 Of skins and leather, or a putrid beast? 1160
 Have not the seers in sacred Scripture sung,
 How swallow'd some their urine and their dung?
 Ate what they'd eaten once, and ate again,—
 But ceas'd to think OMNIPOTENCE was vain?

Have others chew'd their curtains as they hung, 1165
 And lick'd the very ashes with their tongue?
 Have some been toss'd upon the foodless main,
 When means to victual at the shores were vain;
 And, spent each morsel, did the Fates not tell
 What human victim to their fury fell? 1170
 And each by turns in shocking carnage gave
 Himself, to snatch a brother from the grave?
 Till only one surviv'd the butcher'd crew,
 Who flesh'd his stomach with a part it grew?

WHAT tho' Britannia partial Nature names 1175
 To nurse a people on her temperate claims?
 What tho' her valleys fertile, fair arise,
 And own the sluices of indulgent skies,
 Whose fresh'ning spring from founts perpetual runs,
 Nor boils, a furnace to but morning suns? 1180
 What tho' her SUMMERS are but evening rays
 To those that scorch beneath eternal blaze?
 Yet don't her crimes incensed Mercy fire,
 And stand obnoxious to celestial ire?
 O might her thanks in holy raptures burn, 1185
 Nor conscious Plenty to the rebel turn!

SHALL she forget the memorable day*,
 The messenger of Justice did not stay?
 Say, did the People plead to mend the times?
 Did Mercy listen to forgive their crimes,
 And scatter *corn in Egypt* from her hand,
 For, lo! a JOSEPH saves the sinking land!
 Yes! Britain found, amid despairing fears,
 Her patriot Josephs to condole her tears:
 O! could the Muse, with every effort, raise
 Her song, to sound the tribute of your praise!
 Or could she pay you but a *meaning* part,
 Pour'd in th' effusions of a grateful heart.
 You throb'd with great designs, and nobly try'd
 The kind SUBSCRIPTION, when a brother sigh'd;

* In the SUMMER of 1795, amid the greatest prospect of *plenty and to spare*, in abounding crops, which had not been excelled nor even equalled in the age: yet, by alarms of scarcity, mostly artificial, (may it never be effaced from British annals, to the eternal disgrace of the Bands of Monopoly) wheat was sold for upwards of TWENTY SHILLINGS the bushel; nor, indeed, could it be obtained at any rate; till Avarice at last found herself mistaken, and, at the commencement of the harvest, offered her grain for less than half *that* price, to the lap of indignant Plenty, and the sneer of honest Industry!—Tho' this will, and ought to be deemed human policy; yet remember, ye Nations! 'tis but a secondary cause—whence the scourge of War—the ravages of Famine—are they not commissioned from the GREAT and PRIMARY DISPOSER of contingencies?

Yourselves the burden of the season bore,
And eas'd life's comforts to desponding poor;
'Twas Charity's fair hand, that smil'd to lay
Her blessings cheapen'd to their scanty pay.
How did they grateful hurry to her stall! 1205
Each, scarce believing, for his humble dole.
An honest matron, worthy if but poor,
Crept with her sack from Penury's low door;
And for the peck, Economy would save,
The tears of thankful courtesy she gave. 1210
Great was the triumph to such worth belov'd,
When Conscience whisper'd that the deed's approv'd!
Unknown to him, whose brutish soul ne'er hears
To wipe one current from a tide of tears;
Whose sordid coffers never lent to Heaven, 1215
Nor felt the tenfold benediction given.
Ah! none but you, Philanthropists, can tell
The secret pleasures of designing well:
Ye good disciples of the tenderest name!
Whose laurel'd temples ask the road to fame, 1220
Did you not fly e'en flowery Pleasure's ground,
To spread your tables for the hamlet round!

Yours the reward hereafter! save the joys
That spring spontaneous whither Virtue buoys*.

SEE! from yon bank, by gleams meridian won, 1225
The speckled snake creeps cautious to the Sun:
Man's first approach her acute eye perceives,
She writhes, disgusted, thro' the rustling leaves,
What if, erected into frightless coils,
'Mid hissing fangs her fancy'd poison boils? 1230
These are the arts Necessity but knows,
To try mock terrors with her dreaded foes.
Soft, Britons, then, your persecuting frowns,
And cease the spade of Prejudice, ye clowns:
To her, as you, wise Nature kindly sends 1235
For bliss, existence—and for *equal* ends.
Does Britain nurse the wily serpent-train,
A scourge from Nature, and her children's bane?
She with her sister, cold Hibernia, boasts
A fabled charter on her temperate coasts. 1240

* At the period alluded to, the poor must have starved, but for the patriotic opulent, who unanimously stood forward to their relief. Foremost of those who came under the Author's knowledge were the Corporation of the city of York; in distributing flour to its necessitous, at an under-rate, their plan saved the objects of it nearly 3000l.

Grateful, her sons, behold th' infected plains
 Where SUMMER flashes ever-hot domains;
 Where suns breed monsters, when oppressing prone
 The horrid regions of the Torrid Zone.

How shrinks the Muse to tread the scaly fens 1245
 Of Oroonoka, unto Niger's dens!
 From swampy forests to the birds they spring,
 And round some trunk in watching numbers cling;
 'Tis wreath'd by hissing fiends! they twist, they play
 The forky tongue, and Nature is a prey. 1250
 Lo! from the silent precipice's glooms
 The sousing condor mutters as he booms——
 When man or beast escap'd, his talons pinn'd
 A meal of serpents, writhing in the wind!
 View the black births the fabling poets sung, 1255
 That dropt, considerate, from a Pliny's tongue;
 Of regions ravag'd from a serpent's jaws,
 Disputing conquest with a field of foes,
 When hoary Time had fill'd the nuisant fen
 With growing despots, nor had planted men. 1260
 Th'astonish'd Muse unhappy Java tells
 Her grim jiboya* trails enormous ells:

* 'Tis said this terrible creature grows to the *full* length of fifty feet, with a body as thick as a hogshead.

Oft in green folds she, fearless, dares to dart,
 And wind voracious round the tyger's heart:
 In vain he shakes—with rampant fury groans—— 1265
 Each twist she creeps, she mashes all his bones;
 Pleas'd then, as loosing from the monster's sides,
 The slimy morsel at a gulp she hides.
 The wild ox bellows, but his limbs, untorn,
 Stretch her long stomach, as she wears the horn. 1270
 The asp, the rattle, and the whip-snake, spring,
 To spit with death a formidable sting.
 Vindictive Heavens!—majestic (more than song)
 He *rattles* dreadful Solitude along!
 Full in the victim's face, unmov'd by pray'rs, 1275
 On gathering spires, with sudden crest he glares!
 Arrests the trav'ler—consternation round——
 Bursts the blue venom, and inflicts the wound;
 Some fated negro feels the mortal pain
 Numb the swell'd head, and rage in every vein; 1280
 His heart beats quick—the deathly visions pass——
 He, tumid, settles to a putrid mass.
 See! humbled Nature trembles at her rod,
 Destruction waits the great destroyer's nod.

BEHOLD in *these* th' avenging SCOURGE DIVINE: 1285
 In *some*, the mercies of their MAKER shine:

Whose tapering scales present a brother's mail,
Yet, sulky-minded, impotently fail.

Such are Britannia's—such the yellow stains
Of Æsculapius*, on Italia's plains :

1290

By man carefs'd, subservient to his ends,
She crawls the chambers of her trusted friends.

Look where in coils the Prince of Serpents lies !
Streak'd, laminated with all Beauty's dyes :

As broods their senseless deity the ground,
All India falls in adoration round.

1295

DOES Britain give the worrying shark his birth?

Or sly torpedo, for to *touch* with death?

When print her valleys from the leopard's pounce?

Or, hunted, hurry the quick-sighted ounce?

1300

When from her caverns do the lynxes run?

Or merciless hyenas, gloomy-dun?

Do wolves agree to form their grisly bands?

Or spotted panthers shake the bloody sands?

Yet may she know, unenvious to control,

1305

Woods are but vocal in continued howl ;

Groves only echo unto neighbouring brakes

The fight of serpents, and the hiss of snakes,

* The Æsculapian serpent.

Where mines of rubies, ever-slighted, flow,
And all the dainties of an Afric glow. 1310

LET Pride, poor boaster of this world! begin
To see what ruins have succeeded sin.
Once the grim wolf would friendly converse keep,
And smiling gambol, with the fearless sheep:
But now fierce Murder his dread empire holds, 1315
And rueful carnage stains the harmless folds.
Then on one pasture skipp'd the social throng,
Now the weak shudders at the furious strong:
The bloody tiger has forgot to spare,
And Mercy's dictate's banish'd from the bear: 1320
The lion stalks with horror on the plain,
And Self-love's careless of another's pain.

IF not presumption to the GRAND DECREE——
Mistake thou, Reason—and, soft Pity's eye,
Ask her frail guidance if the tear, that's due, 1325
Ye brutal nations! may be dropt for you.
For think—that jaw, which Innocency feeds,
Was curst to cruel for a lordling's deeds!

SOON as the Sun begins the steady slope,
And rolls him downward from th' extinguish'd cope, 1330

To walks romantic be the Muse to stray,
 And sing the glories of declining Day.
 To Fancy's flights wild Nature various holds
 The ridgy convex of her shining WOLDS*:
 Whose breezy sides, mid constant-heaving gales, 1335
 Spout a fair sweep of riv'lets on the vales.
 And what a prospect glitters from their hills,
 As all the gaze of ravish'd Fancy fills!
 The gleaming fields their ev'ry tint display,
 Illum'd, and sparkling in the beams of day: 1340
 High dance the chalkpits, and the turnpike lanes:
 There the brown fallows burnish'd ether stains;
 Yonder the pastures mix their brightening greens,
 And the long fence in crooked windings leans.
 Where blush the cornfields, wave the forests nigh; 1345
 And wild-woods lift their shaggy tops on high.
 Round on the summit of a mazy line
 The piny plumps of happy LONDSBRO'† shine.—
 LONDSBRO'! transport me, all her guardian Pow'rs,
 With you to range a second Eden's bow'rs! 1350

* Mountains in Yorkshire.

† One of his GRACE the DUKE of DEVONSHIRE's villas, situated on the side of these hills.

Delightsome groves! your hamlet let me hail,
Whose crest sits shelter'd in a woody vale.
The rural Genius haunts each sacred glade,
Lull'd by the gushings of the fresh cascade;
Whose bubbling fount first owns the pebbly rill, 1355
That, fretting, widens; fretting, widens still:
While now it startles at the sudden leap,
And, faintly foaming, dashes down the steep:
But, as it flounces into headlong waves,
Flung prone, a bigger precipice it laves: 1360
Till, as each torrent on each other swells,
It spreads, fast-whirling, into glassy dells:
And, troubled, leaves, in every deepening space,
A sportive harbour to the finny race:
Then, as it came, th' expansive surface waits, 1365
And softly steals along the straiten'd grates.

HERE, at this vista's elevated mound,
Survey the beauties of the country round.—
Goodness! the prospect should I tempt to tell,
On fairy visions I for ever dwell! 1370
Down every view of avenues and lanes,
See palace-halls, and villages, and fanes:

Far misty Howden on the senses pours
A pile, half-ruin'd, of her antique tow'rs:
Majestic Ebor* lifts his towering tires, 1375
His fair cathedral with her sacred spires:
There Hull, scarce yielding to the city's gaze,
Bids in less pomp her crowded turrets blaze:
The child of Commerce, and a port, she's free,
And boasts her charter on the neighbouring sea. 1380
I too behold her nimble shipping stay,
In conscious safety anchor'd at her bay.
Does now her merchant eye the riding foam,
And hearty-welcome the glad convoy home?
Pleas'd, too a partner's lucky poops he sees 1385
Shoot their tall masts, unsheeted in the breeze:
Ask him what Gallic ruffian ever scarr'd
The brazen-fonted garrison, his guard?
To thee, grand Humber! let me shift the scene,
Now ting'd with crystal, now in waving green; 1390
That, giving back the briny tide again,
Heaves inexhausted tributes to the main.

* Eboracum, or York.

Fetch Fancy home, on fresh Inquiry's wing,
 The fane-topt cliff of hilly Holme* to sing.
 Say what induc'd the hamlet sires, untold, 1395
 Perhaps whose ashes the foundation hold,
 To lift yon awful structure, great the toil,
 And choose the mountain for the church's soil?
 Did force divine the mystic purpose shew,
 And are the legends of tradition true? — 1400
 See! have the sages (for they crows appear),
 Solemn and sad, a brother on the bier?
 To the steep side with hoary locks they cling,
 Nor half his dirges, for the burden, sing.

THESE are but part of DEVONSHIRE's delights, 1405
 Stamp on the brow of hilly Lonsbro'-heights. —
 Forgive the Muse her too-presumptuous lay!
 Can't *these* attract a NOBLE MASTER's stay?
 Might not thy presence, and the SUMMER hours,
 Cheer the lone bosom of yon weeping bowers? 1410
 The hospitable dome, with conscious cringe,
 Breaks out in sorrows on the beauteous hinge ;

* A village, whose church stands on the summit of an arduous hill, at the distance of several miles from part of the inhabitants. There wanders a tradition among the rustics, that a miracle was the cause.

That fund* to failing poverty in years
 Longs to discharge the tribute of their tears:
 In wish of humble pensioners, they'd see 1415
 Thy patriotic ancestors in *thee*.
 Economy, that rules at Plenty's door,
 Industrious, tells the blessings of thy poor:
 How might the breast of Charity rejoice,
 As angels tun'd it to the cymbal's voice, 1420
 At these, when, limping to the constant fane,
 Rob'd like a sister and a brother train,
 They ask the blessings of a FATHER down,
 To prosper virtue, and reward thy boon!
 From Doric Mansions when again explor'd 1425
 All yonder hamlets of a generous lord,
 LONDSBRO' shall gladden from unjealous tear,
 And humbled CHATSWORTH shall a rival fear!

LEAD, Fame, (sole index to my artless tale)
 The Muse and Fancy unto Derwent's vale.—— 1430

* An hospital for a stipulated and successive number of widows and widowers of decayed and meritorious families.——The endowments are, a portion of ground to each apartment; a pecuniary salary; the attendance of a surgeon and apothecary; an annual donation of uniform vestments, &c. on condition that, thus gowned, they use every means in attending divine service.

Tir'd of the rugged wastes, confus'd around,
 The mountain's peak, the precipice's mound,
 Like some bewilder'd traveller, she pours
 The ravish'd senses into Chatsworth bow'rs*!
 Enchanting greens for nuisant heather lie, 1435
 The contrast's magic to the feasted eye:
 'Midst paradise a pompous palace stands,
 The valley's boast, the pride of artist hands;
 As each appendage elegance fills,
 GAVENDO TUTUS† glitters to the hills; 1440
 Around the polish'd fabric and its wings
 Ten thousand beauties Art and Nature flings:
 The bridge, the tower, the mimic-castled isle,
 Bid gliding Derwent fascination smile;
 The gardens here to wildernesses wind, 1445
 In walks, with statues of the curious kind;
 Whose gushing brooks e'en lull the busy day
 While streamlets murmur as the fountains play.
 Where the fine bason in its dimply cell
 Reflects an image of the lily's bell, 1450

* A magnificent villa of his GRACE's in Derbyshire.

† The family motto in large characters over one of the fronts: these twelve letters reaching from end to end, give an inexpressible grandeur to its *real* appearance.

A various groupe of harmless monsters play,
And seem to whisper unto Fancy's lay.
Here Neptune stoops : and there his dolphins fling
Their measur'd waters to th' approving king :
Near, the huge sea-horse tempts the listened scream, 1455
And breathing nostrils spue the limpid stream :
There on the bank, to Nature's model right,
A weeping willow cheats the pleasur'd sight ;
Unparch'd by SUMMER, or the stripping year,
From every leaflet drops a dewy tear. 1460
Lo! from yon temple, and a sacred rill,
Scoop'd in the bosom of an arduous hill,
The water-working pumpers have their turns,
And sea-nymphs empty their replenish'd urns.
From this mean source a rapid river shocks, 1465
In broken surges thundering thro' the rocks :
That, while each step a louder wonder form,
Sublimely hushes every mental storm.
Till, as if weary'd of its angry growl,
Another hill commands the watery roll 1470
To sink, unseen, in surly-seeming rest,
And lave the caverns of its gloomy breast.

AH! could the Muse to juster song impart
The boons of Nature, and the works of Art,

Woods, lawns, and parks, with velvet walks she'd sing, 1475
 As greens on greens in fair profusion spring :
 She'd tune those arched shades, and varnish'd plains,
 And Fays should answer to the dulcet strains.
 But shall Ambition prompt the poet's tongue
 To hint that CHATSWORTH ever blooms, unsung? 1480
 Whence came those files, that emulate to fill
 The highest station on the wood-clad hill,
 (Its piny tenants on the sloping side
 Head above head in Nature's order spy'd)
 But to admire and whisper, as they grow, 1485
 Th' unequall'd beauties of the vales below ?

HUSH'D be the world ! while Nature prostrate falls;
 For NATURE's LORD in voice of thunder calls.
 From the big South HIS livid lightnings flash,
 An awful herald of each direful crash ! 1490
 HIS opening clouds burst wide in silver streams,
 And pointed torches mix their fiery gleams.
 From verge to verge then runs, in bellowing slope,
 A horrid peal, that shakes the brazen cope.
 Th' affrighted cattle start : the trembling steeds 1495
 Seek their sad neighbours of the frantic meads :
 The huddling flocks (is Innocence afraid !)
 Scarce bleat their sorrows by the lurid shade.

Their tim'rous shepherd, and his mastiff bold,
 Quit the dread heath, and seek the distant fold. 1500
 The hind laborious, and the peasant poor
 Crowd their pale faces at the cottage door;
 Dread omens meet them in confus'd alarms,
 The fate of nations, and the clash of arms.

WHAT tho' the clouds dissolve the plenteous rain 1505
 In storms impetuous on the smoking plain?
 'Tis on the pavement his'd, now wet, now dry,
 Nor cools one furnace in the fervid sky.
 The night comes dismal dark, save the quick blaze,
 When Horror looks more horrible displays. 1510
 The treach'rous East now opes with sudden wo,
 Breathes the blue flame, and flushes to one glow:
 Whilst over-head all-splitting Ether growls,
 And Earth hangs tottering on her frighted poles.
 It swells yet louder, and yet louder aims 1515
 Convulse the brazen firmament to flames.

ALL night awake, the guilty bosom dreads
 Each bolt of Justice aiming at their heads.
 No sleep can hush them on forgetful down,
 Or seal their eye-lids, if JEHOVAH frown! 1520

They stoop in cellars, ('tis no gloom the night);
 And careful veil the avenues of light:
 Here, tho' their hands the muffled eyes may stay,
 The light'ning glances, and presents it day.
 Sing'd are the curtains thro' the heated pane;
 And lead's in fusion on the shrivell'd fane.
 With baneful touch the fiery bullets glow,
 Then dash down chimnies on the crowds below;
 Or, Ministers of Vengeance in their train,
 Spread conflagration thro' the city's lane.
 Blue gleams the cell, where cottage friends recline;
 Hush'd by young seraphs to the WILL DIVINE:
 They see the moors around their hamlet rise;
 Snatch'd into torches by the lambent skies.
 Yon shepherd, kneeling with his children, calls:
 The thatch fast-kindles at his frightened walls:
 He flies, unequal to the crackling beam,
 That adds new meteors to the dreadful gleam.

Didst not thou, FRANKLIN, touch the Thunder's brow;
 With Nature enter into parley too?
 And underneath her pregnant embryo stand,
 To fetch the flying light'nings to thine hand?
 Durst thou, presumptuous, philosophic Sage!
 Teach MAN defiance to the GODHEAD's rage;

When some, presenting the unhallow'd string, 1545
Were struck the martyrs of th' electric spring*.

'Tis gleaming midnight—and the thunder broods
Red vengeance, mutter'd from the clapping clouds.
The whole horizon streams! whence, opening, flies
A gust of flashes, chafing upward skies. 1550
Can sweating mortals, righteous Nature! bear
An aching bosom, and a torrid air?
Dreadful to him, who wanders wilds by guests,
And finds no brother in a like distress:
He faints! he falls! or, staggering to some cave, 1555
A refuge finds, but tumbles to his grave!
Sear'd are his vestments by some quivering spire,
The rock seems kindling and the wind's on fire:
His buttons melt! no tending friend's to wail,
Soon a black corpse he putrifies the gale. 1560

THE frying pines their tears of resin gem,
And corn stands blasted on the sooty stem!
Where deep-cleft oaks lie mourning to the gales,
Their cliff self-thunders to the crashing vales.

* Alluding to his plan and previous experiments for securing buildings by conductors.

Smote by the light'ning's shafts, the singed sheep 1565
Lies, livid, there, with Innocence asleep.
Heavens! let *me* kneel, and supplicate in pray'r,
I seem to singe, and swoon in sultry air:
Aiming at me, they blaze! they lick! they meet!
And pour a liquid furnace at my feet! 1570

YET, midst these horrors, this ethereal jar,
That heaves convulsive elements to war,
The good man's comfort is a FATHER still,
Hush'd in calm resignation to his will.
His Father HE, who beckon'd to yon storm, 1575
And bids each peal his embassy perform:
Whose finger threw them, and they *dare* not cease
Till by HIM cradled, and HE whispers peace.
The good man smiles beneath the angry fray,
When the red concave bursts abortive day: 1580
Safe in the field as in the castled hall,
And thinks it mercy should HIS thunders fall.
He eyes his future home—would stay or run,
And prays his PARENT that *his will be done*:
Not with the fool's presumption, but in hope 1585
Angels encircle his defenceless scalp!

NOT so with Vice! she seeks the lowest cell,
 And quakes, as thinking 'tis her latest knell:
 Shrunk in the veil of Guilt, with bloody tears
 The voice of Vengeance in each clap she hears: 1590
 Dare she her plains in sweet composure tread,
 Or prop the thunders with her hated head?
 Where's now the critic of his MAKER's deeds?
 The vaunting Infidel a coward bleeds.
 Ye Sons of Pleasure! who but live the day, 1595
 Car'd not to-morrow, nor yet learn'd to pray:
 Worldlings, who heaven for sordid dust devour;
 Ye rich oppressors of your brother poor;
 Ye cannibals, the chief, to mercy blind,
 Each impious trader in the human kind; 1600
 You tremble *now*, when Nature's only prone
 In tested homage at th' ALMIGHTY's throne!
 What will you, say, ('tis all that thought supplies,
 Comparing terrors of yon pealing skies)
 When earth beneath you at HIS presence burns, 1605
 And Nature headlong from her axles turns.

BEHOLD! th' archangel trumps! a pompous glare
 Of heav'n-born princes hover in the air!
 The JUDGE appears in vesting Glory's shine,
 Solemnity surrounds Magnificence Divine! 1610

Serene HE rides, where Truth to Justice buoys,
 Her sword and balance, with a world in poise.
 The summon'd worlds attend, reap'd from each bound
 Where stretches vast the universe around.
 A sentence *thunders*, or of wrath or grace,
 Big with the fates of all the human race.
 Then the black night of dissolution see!
 E'en time stands tottering to eternity!
 This frame of things, th' ETERNAL CAUSE withdrawn,
 Unhing'd, can boast no basis of their own:
 Orbs crush on orbs, while belching Chaos reel,
 As tumbling ruins at Destruction's heel.
 Ocean brews up his brimstone-billow'd flood—
 The sun's in sackcloth, and the moon's in blood!
 Fate nods their fall—each element's on beck,
 With suns and systems for the general wreck.
 See cumbrous earth a single cinder's pyre—
 All ether's wrapping in a sheet of fire!
 Thanks to the REAPER of these worlds be paid,
 To HIM whose goodness mars but what he made,
 If angels summon'd HIS last harvest home,
 They've lodg'd safe Virtue in her FATHER's dome:
 Her sons are landed on their native shore,—
 The furnace of Adversity's no more!

Or needs the GREAT OMNIPOTENT

Thou nest of sins, the bar of truth's reveal'd—
 What mountain crush'd thee, or what rock conceal'd?
 O! had they timely thus, ere, whelp'd, ye fell,
 And earth received the black brood of hell!
 But where's the deist laugh—fat Pleasure's frown—
 Lull'd in what chariot of luxurious down?
 Blasphemous, now, in sight of forfeit bliss,
 Go! parch for ever in the blue abyfs!
 Go! talk to fiery tempests—worlds, in names,
 Are gulphs wide-yawning, supplicate the flames!

THE Morn comes dappling from her orient skies
 In smiles that glad the rudest gazer's eyes.
 But who the light'ning smother'd at his will?
 Or bade the grumbling thunders to be still?
 Was't not that POWER commanding in the fight
 That rag'd terrific thro' the growling night?
 Then did he grasp the sceptre of the sky,
 Or bid the mightiest of his legions fly,
 To bind the struggling elements *with care*,
 And stop the breaches of concussive air?
 Did he bestir them with unwonted aims,
 Or pour down rivers when he quench'd the flames?
 Shall *thus* heaven's AUTHOR hush his lap, the skies,
 Or needs the GREAT OMNIPOTENT allies?

Convulsive Nature trembles at HIS call,
And all her storms to softest slumbers fall. 1660

Tho' every blessing's to oblivion hurl'd,
HEAVEN still showers favours on a thankless world :
This told its wrath, and stern with mercies ran,
Whilst impious murmur'd discontented man*.
And shall he strive against the soft controul, 1665
That flash'd conviction on his tepid soul?
Shall he, ungrateful! of the brutes the scorn,
That gaze their lowing anthems to the Morn,
Slack to praise HIM, in loudest-bursting strains,
Who lull'd the thunders, and refresh'd his plains? 1670

How Nature smiles with renovated charms!
How ruddy Ceres fills her joyous arms!
Her laughing hills, and valleys, thick with grain,
Swell the full ear, and dignify the plain.
The plenteous rain with vigour saps the soil, 1675
And the share brightens to the ploughman's toil :
The nice-turn'd mushroom mantles the fresh meads,
And, marrowy-white, a fair umbrella feeds.

* Be it supposed, what oft happens, the first rain after a long and severe drought.

The limpid current a new tribute brings,
 And amply bubbles from the cheerful springs. 1680
 The flocks, the herds, that browse the grass-grown hill,
 Stand on its banks, and sip the gushing rill.

How fair this morn, expressive of delight!
 Each breast contrasts it with the lowering night.
 Pursue the pleasing image (can it cloy?)
 To resurrection, and the morn of joy.— 1685
 How then shall virtue, that surviv'd the storm
 Of time, of tempest to this mortal worm,
 Hug with rapt Faith each transport that she sings,
 To chaunt her perils on immortal strings! 1690
 And weep, if angels weep, in grateful tears,
 The blooming trials of her infant years.
 She greets her wafted partners of the way,
 In full fruition of eternal day,
 To part no more—in bonds of union reap 1695
 Such genuine friendship as the heavenly keep:
 For, though not stations all alike they claim,
 Enjoyment mingles the fraternal flame.

Ye clowns! come, hasten to the russet vale,
 Yon rape-field whitens to the fervid gale. 1700

Ye Nymphs! too, mingle on the jocund plains,
And give the morning to your sweetheart swains,
Stretch'd out immense the lusty cloth now tie,
Nice in the middle where the harvests lie.
Quick the whole village hearty-join their pains 1705
In thought good-natur'd for a neighbour's gains:
The busy spot in swarming vulgar blends,
And each the station of his labour tends.
They start the general task—all hands engage,
From infant strivers to the stooping sage: 1710
A matron grey, who fifty SUMMERS told,
Gleans the long stubble, and forgets she's old.
These from their shoulders heave the harvests round,
Loose in brown sheaves upon the sheeted ground:
While, at some signal from the master-swain, 1715
In order follow all his thrasher train.
Each boasts his might, and seeks the highest name,
Till toiling Merit earn the village fame:
The stouter youths lead up th' aspiring frail,
And teach the music of the flying flail, 1720
Hands heaving high, and straining every pow'r,
Fast in due turns descend the wooden show'r;
A master's ear approves the battering sound,
And cheers their hearts to run the giddy round,

Meantime, the profits of their toil remain, 1725
 An heap, clean-swelling of the blackest grain;
 Some fill the spacious sacks, while others blind
 The mingling chaff into the darken'd wind:
 Or sweep the wasted seed; or gayly throw
 Topp'd o'er the fences, all the whitening straw. 1730
 Each rustic eyes his favourite lass the while
 With loving look, and emulates her smile;
 T' excel the rest in rural pride he'll try,
 For seemly Labour must her favours buy.
 The joyous crowds at intervals now flee, 1735
 To lose their toils in Recreation's glee:
 To please the prudish nymphs, what cares they pay!
 And wholesome beverage mitigates the day:
 Eve echoes wide the clamour of the plains,
 In honest shouts of merry-hearted swains; 1740
 The fine-strung fiddle all the village brings,
 Neat-stepping music to the finger'd strings.

FAIR Innocence! how thy decorums please!
 Ye Hamlets, boast accomplishments like these!
 But, O! the Muse, in friendly caution, soils 1745
 Her cheerful ditties with your civil broils;
 When brute assassins, in a fuddled fray,
 Bid brother victims be the challeng'd prey.

With all the factious rabble at his heels,
 Each but his madness, never reason, feels. 1750
 Thus, passion-phrenzied, like to fiends they go
 And breathe destruction to the fancied foe;
 By sprites infernal fir'd, whose forms they hide,
 As warring wolves the duel they decide.—
 Wing'd by base Malice, lo! what fury darts 1755
 The leaden fist upon their murder'd hearts!
 Ah! fratricide, too late the tempest is repress'd,
 He bleeds but breathes not from the blackening breast.

FALSE honour this! ah, spurn the horrid stain,
 Its crime's too *vulgar* for the rural swain! 1760
 Let the piqu'd guardian of his martial fame
 By sword and dagger catch the bully's name;
 But you, ye swains, condemn the pedant rage,
 In village records have a nobler page.
 Yours be the strife, to emulate, in peace, 1765
 The heaviest harvest; and the fairest fleece;
 To plough the straightest furrow; and to gain
 The prize impending on the fattest plain.

LET rural damsels, with consenting swains,
 Led by fair Virtue, seek the cooling plains: 1770

Let friends compose the moralizing pair,
 And quaff the dainties of an evening air.
 I too might hit the academic's way,
 And mark the beauties of yon setting day;
 Leave little Earth; improving Nature scan 1775
 With wide survey, and dignify the *man*.

COME, PUDICASTA! be thy cares to lie
 The lawn, the landskip, and the thimble by;
 And in that blush of modesty, thine own!
 Good-nature blended with the virgin's frown; 1780
 Smiles sweetly-beaming from thine eyes askance;
 Love in thy looks, and virtue in each glance;
 The winning graces blended in thy train—
 Come, thus accomplish'd, to thy favourite plain.
 You need no robe, save Innocence, to bring, 1785
 In whom fair-shines the rosy-finger'd Spring.
 O! could the hills of Caledonia hail
 A humbler couple in Britannia's vale!
 Then shew the bower, to pluck the plenteous bays,
 Where tuneful THOMSON with AMANDA strays! 1790
 O! might one wreath (should blasting critics spare)
 Be DAMON's boast, on PUDICASTA's hair!
 Is this deny'd? some other theme shall fire
 Th' undamp'd vibrations of a VILLAGE LYRE;

Some humble part th' admiring youth shall choose;
Where ZOUCH and KIPLIN win the classic Muse.

THE Sun obliquely shoots the blunted rays;
The forest quivers, and the turrets blaze;
His burning triumph o'er, in azure furl'd,
He flood's a mellow lustre on the world.

LET me ascend the nodding-terrac'd hill,
The landskip lies epitomiz'd at will:
Soft let me sink amid the velvet greens,
Where Nature's carpet for my pillow leans:
'Tis now the Zephyr fans a brisker breeze,
That puffs and whispers in the twinkling trees:
'Tis gasp no more—reviving Nature's blest
As the Day's tyrant rushes to the west.
Wild frisk the herds—the skipping fauns advance,
And parent-antlers teach the butting dance:
The lambkins frolic to the close of day,
And, frowning, now their butting frontlets play;
Then in fair chase the panting couple wills
To start, and quick run bleating round the hills:
The flock of sires approve—the shepherd large
Commends, but pats the fleetest of his charge.

Slow to yon dingle, by the river's glide,
 These, number'd, nibble to the farthest side:
 Nurs'd on thy lap, Britannia! they recline,
 Hills white with flocks, and vallies black with kine. 1820
 Till folding Eve demands their wonted care,
 The vacant shepherds to their flutes repair:
 And at yon rill's embroider'd banks they stay,
 To chaunt the carols of the closing day.
 The milkmaid *this*, pretending haste, detains, 1825
 Who cross'd the stile on purpose to his plains.
 Cheer'd with approaching eve, the mower blithe
 Still toils, but latest whets the sounding scythe.
 The peopled groves attune the swarming quire,
 And all is vocal with a songster's fire: 1830
 The blackbird, chuckling at th' impetuous shake,
 Vies with a brother in the neighbouring brake*:
 Each timely strikes, and now the contest burns,
 And each is listen'd, and excels, by turns:
 The yellow bill e'en seems to blush in pain 1835
 As Echo vibrates to a rival strain:
 When thrill'd each tribute, on the downy spray
 Content they slumber, till to-morrow's lay.

* The Muse that has listened to Nature is no stranger to the hawthorn-contest.

Sweet songsters! vain I sympathise those notes
 With discord mingling in your fainter throats; 1840
 Soon must you cease to inspire the poet's song,
 And, tuneless, flutter an autumnal throng.

PARENT of Shades now bursts the clouded maze,
 To shine the evening in his fullest blaze.
 Bright thro' yon wood, where piny vistas lie, 1845
 The gilded palace flashes every die:
 Blue thro' each chink the mimic figures play,
 And suns on suns the dazzling sashes ray:
 There, softly moving, flits the wind-mill-sail,
 Toss'd with broad banners to the swelling gale. 1850
 The giant trav'ler stalks, in boundless trails,
 And wood-crown'd mountains fill the darkening vales,
 See! Ocean smiles, and glitters,—what a scene!
 Cerulean surges changing into green:
 The smooth expanse, on silver fluxes borne, 1855
 Gleams, a bright mirror to the woods and corn.
 A long, long length of endless shadows fall
 From fanes, and forests, and the dwarfish wall.
 The Sun's fast-dropping, when his wheels have roll'd
 A concave circuit round the world in gold: 1860

His broadening orb now courts th' attemper'd eyes,
 And Luna hastens to possess the skies.
 He hangs with level earth—in tears he shines,
 Darts o'er the surface horizontal lines:
 No cloud bespots his polish'd orb, but woos 1865
 The far reflection of his dazzling brows.
 He sinks! he sinks! a fluid glimmering yields—
 Smiles his last favours on the trembling fields:
 These laughing summits catch the silver dies,
 But while I speak the pamper'd beauty flies! 1870
 Behind some ragged cliff he's half convey'd,
 Then sidelong strikes in universal shade.

How grand the paintings of the flushing skies!
 Yon fleece now kindles, and again it dies:
 Streak'd are the vaulted roofs, by partial lights, 1875
 And ribb'd with gold above the mountain-heights,
 Whilst dappled Eve advance, in mantle grey,
 To draw the curtains of departed day,
 Gradual her clouds the purple Nor'-west spread,
 And sally dimly o'er th' extinguish'd red: 1880
 Fast, and then faster, thickens Twilight grave,
 Till Darkness issues from her private cave.

THE Day is gone! to you, ye murdering train,
 Who liv'd to loiter, was it sent in vain:
 And where's the trace hereafter to be found 1885
 In you, who danc'd with pleasure the gay round?
 Speak the remorse, ye here-devoid of shame!
 When Time's GREAT AUTHOR shall his jewel claim,
 That you, unable to recal the crime,
 Mark'd not improvement on the wings of Time. 1890
 What then pretences, that your *thoughts* redeem
 The *real* moments with *to-morrow's* dream?

GUARDIAN of YOUTH! inspire a stripling's lays
 To lisp some portion of thy boundless praise:
 The Muse, thy daughter, may she feebly say 1895
 The gifts, the mercies of another day:
 But what's the humblest of the rhyming throng?
 Eternity would ask the seraph's song:
 Eternity itself—angelic pow'r,
 Would faint to tell the blessings of an hour! 1900
 Thy soul peep out, and burst her shell of clay;
 Think, if thou canst, th' unmeasurable way.
 Ten thousand worlds, thick-studded thro' the blue,
 By myriads peopled, are an atom few:
 Millions of systems, universes, bound 1905
 A small inclosure of the wide profound.

In *all* 'tis motion, HIS directing nod,
 Wheel'd at HIS feet, the pensioners of GOD!
 Each earth-like surface, swarming with its sons,
 Now light, now dark, this *daily* circuit runs: 1910
 Each soul, each worm, HIS Providence attends;
 They're fed, they're clothed, ere HIS sun descends,
 The mercies of a day! prepar'd by thee,
 Millions were wafted to eternity:
 Snatch'd not one moment ere the speaking bell 1915
 Some rebel convert from the jaws of hell?
 One grain, unmeasur'd, of thy sands renew'd—
 Turn'd it the balance for beatitude?
 Then prize the minutes, let not one be vain,
 'Tis worth yon Sparkler* ush'ring with her train: 1920
 For half the blessings of its slighted stay,
 Her gold, her creatures, not herself, can pay.
 The mercies of a moment, were they sung,
 Faint fall the accents of a cherub's tongue.
 Tell, ye, whose pinnace, in the sapphire road, 1925
 Coasts on the confines of the Mount of GOD,
 To what fair breadths, profundities, and heights,
 One moment measures mercies and delights—
 Of blifs they banquet, freely as their own,
 In draughts nectareous, gushing from the throne! 1930

* The Evening Star.

Round HIM, as children, all Creation stand,
Cry "ABBA, feed!"—and hang upon HIS hand.

NATURE, all-hail! sweet harbinger of rest,
Eve, sober-footed, creeping to thy breast:
The whole Creation, with consenting strain,
Have paid their latest tributes in thy fane.
The fleecy hills have bleated their soft tales;
And Echo's silent to the lowing vales;
The feather'd concerts, with assembled pow'rs,
Have chaunted vespers in their native bow'rs;
The insect nations sleep, till humming Morn,
And the sole murmur is the beetle's horn;
Yon village-bell the solemn peal has rung,
While shepherd-nymphs the milker's sonnet sung:
I too would join the undiffembling throng,
And raise to Nature her untutor'd song.—
Teach me to scorn the sluggish wish of fools,
Be Virtue's maxims drawn from Nature's rules:
Let not the stains of blackening Vice beguile
My slippery feet, or early years defile:
Let Avarice, Pride, and all the world of toys,
That taints my bosom, and its peace destroys,
Be far remov'd!—thine easy truths impart,
With mental beauties to adorn my heart!

1935

1940

1945

1950

COME then, Assurance! blushing modest pain, 1955
 The pleading Virtues blended in thy train:
 And thou, divine Ambition! be thou meed,
 To fire each effort of a VILLAGE REED.
 Let mad-brain'd brothers of the youthful file,
 And Folly, redden with disdainful smile: 1960
 Let Ignorance with pedant impudence deride,
 And hold for laughter his convulsive side:
 Let needless Jealousy point out Despair;
 And grey-grown Dulness bid the Muse beware:
 Let little Envy vent her secret spite, 1965
 To pull the fledging trembler from her height:
 Yet still she Nature woo— with her she roves
 Thro' Contemplation's and Retirement's groves;
 When Reason reigns, and hush'd Creation all
 Thrills her GREAT MAKER to th' unpassion'd soul! 1970
 The knell of curfew, or the howlet's lay,
 Are themes that suit her melancholy lay.
 She seeks the twilight walk, the lover's glade,
 And virtuous Fancy consecrates the shade.

FOR Virtue, led by Innocence, to stray, 1975
 These vaulted walks point out the hallow'd way:
 The crooked windings of whose alleys green
 In fairest colours paint a sylvan scene.

Wild Nature's carpet spreads th' enamel'd dells,
 That breathe their sweets where bloſſom'd alder ſmells : 1980
 The quivering leaves imbibe the falling dew,
 And life's weak ſprings the ſcented gales renew.
 Pale Phœbe, too, repays her borrow'd ray,
 And trembling ſhadows round my footſteps play ;
 Touch'd with her glimmering beams, the moon-light glade 1985
 Displays its beauties to the doubtful ſhade.
 I pierce the boſom of Profuſion's bloom,
 The bearded Sylvan's venerable gloom ;
 Where oaks, and pines, and virgin poplars frown,
 High-tipt with radiance from the ſilver Moon. 1990
 Silence and Night, twin-ſiſters, Darkneſs woos,
 And ſcarce a grey-beam ſtruggles thro' the boughs,
 Sacred to Nature—'tis her inmoſt fane !
 Haunts unpolluted by the vulgar vain !
 No guilt-ſtung conſcience dares her viſit pay, 1995
 And, Fancy's goblins, be ye hence ! away !
 Such heavenly peace ! (where, buſtling mortals ! now ?)
 'Twould preſs the hermit's and the veſtal's vow—
 With roots, and ſprings, and caves, in umbrage furl'd,
 Be *Miſanthropos*, and renounce the world ! 2000
 THESE are the bowers, where village lovers rove ;
 And ſlighted maidens weep the perjur'd grove ;

Where love-sick shepherd's pen the melting lay;
 And happier couples all their vows repay.
 Oft in these haunts, where flowery eglantine,
 And myrtle bands with honey-suckles twine,
 Whilst Luna held her silver lamp on high,
 The trembling swain stood musing for a sigh.
 Startling at shadows, for the sneering clown,
 Whose sluggish heart ne'er felt a Myra's frown,
 On bended knees, the rural pencil lin'd
 His labour'd courtship on the smoothest rind:
 Perhaps the flutter'd stock-dove saw the cause,
 Coo'd her new loves, and told him all her woes:
 On the top branch the squirrel peep'd to know,
 And skipp'd, and wonder'd at the clown below.
 The mystic-meaning beech, carv'd round, behold;
 Yet none, but lovers, can its hints unfold.

NIGHT's gentle Empress! yet whose bolder sway
 Calms the rude whistlings of a stormy sea,
 Conduct me, wandering, where yon opening yields
 A pleasing image of the twilight fields.
 Hills, dales, and hamlets mock the dubious light,
 And half are hidden in the garb of night.
 The river's misty-white, and all the streams,
 As Fancy limns them with reflected beams;

The skies are pictur'd, and the jutting hill,
 And moons fast-tremble on the smallest rill,
 The bean-fields breathe behind the glimmering trees,
 Their sweets ambrosial on the silent breeze :
 Mild Zephyrs clap their wings, and gently play,
 To waft the incense of the new-made hay.
 The drony beetle, wheeling all his might,
 Hums, as he's wafted on the wings of Night,
 And, while the Muse to wooing Nature speak,
 She beats loud vengeance on the startling cheek.
 The gloomy bat from antique ruins springs,
 Prowls for his prey, and flaps the leather'd wings ;
 Or round the chimney mutters at my ear,
 And struggles, awkward, the revol'd career.

Yon's Philomela from the green-wood vale,
 In carols laden with a love-sick tale :
 She vies with all the vocal sons of day,
 And Silence listens to the tuneful lay.
 Thou, sweetest far! still swell the serenade,
 E'en Contemplation tingles at thine aid :
 From thy wild clarion every accent, clear,
 Thrills thro' the valleys to the poet's ear.
 Oft shall my feet, at Nature's calmest hour,
 In silence wander to thy favourite bower :

When SUMMER-EVE my Pudicasta brings,
 She'll learn to pity when a lover sings :
 I'll plead thy case, expound the moral sung,
 And steal the music of thy twittering tongue !

I QUIT this view of placid landships now, 2055
 And, curious, wander to yon hillock's brow.
 What tho' the Muse can't prove a Newton's page
 With deep researches of maturing age ?
 What tho' bewilder'd in plain truths she lies
 Of *second Newton's** under Woolwich skies ? 2060
 What tho' her years ne'er felt Urania lay
 The schemes her proud astronomers display :
 To wheel a system ; and correct its run ;
 To distance planets ; and to girt the sun :
 Shall she forbear to candour and to men 2065
 The simple notion's of a stripling's pen ?
 Can't *she*, in flights of artless Nature, trace
 Her MAKER pictur'd on each point of space ?

BoAST not of skill, ye *vainly-learn'd*, to me, 2070
 My humbler optics can JEHOVAH see !

* Dr. Hutton.

From this mean summit, lo! the careless muse
 A grand, untub'd observatory views.
 Hasty to heaven I lift the stranger gaze,
 To count the millions of the twinkling maze.—
 O come! thou child, whom smiling Science deigns
 To lead thro' Nature to celestial plains;
 In whom she saw the bud of genius rise,
 And rock'd thy cradle as she limn'd the skies,
 Be here—to teach my panting soul the lay,
 And light my footsteps to yon realms of day.
Teach me those wonders only *heard* before,
 And lead bold Fancy whither Thought can soar,

2075

2080

SWIFT thro' Creation the poor pilgrim runs,
 By glimmering planets and ideal suns;
 Where cluster'd gems, that paint the Milky-Way,
 Be pois'd, and dazzle with redundant day.
 Yon's Earth,—poor mote!—scarce seen thro' Space's veil,
 Nor casts the balance in Creation's scale:
 There too's that Sun, on which a system hung;
 Danc'd round his centre, and his Pæans sung:
 Ten thousand brighter in their orbits play,
 Lost in th' effulgence,—all his light's a ray!

2085

2090

Here other worlds, in empyrean green,
 In other concaves, tip th' ethereal screen:
 Here other swains with simple skill inquire 2095
 What beauteous studs their nightly fancies fire.

LET not the superficial pedant say
 "All these are lamps to substitute the day,"
 When one, hung nearer, or another moon,
 Drowns the whole lavish firmamental boon. 2100
 No!—these are worlds, where chaining Concord runs,
 And worlds are systems, and yon gems their suns:
 For, tho' minutely as a spark they shine,
 Their bulk's unfathom'd, but by rules divine.
 Half of yon stud ten earths to measure, scan, 2105
 What's then their distance, but a seeming span?
 Could Adam's sons the line in numbers say
 Stretch'd from the rising to the setting day?

CREATIVE Fancy! may thy pinions fly
 Beyond weak vision, or the beamy sky; 2110
 Leave suns and worlds; by constellations spring;
 Launch beyond thought; and far-creation sing.
 Still here's no limit to the blue profound!
 Still starry heavens my swift ideas bound!

Above, diffus'd, Creation still I spy ! 2115
And millions more 'bove other millions lie !
Then, Ages! waft me, at the seraph's will,
Instant thro' systems—'tis Creation still !
Still, still the wonders of my GOD I trace,
Who calls my journey but an inch in space ! 2120
All, all are nought ! give INFINITE its birth,
And worlds whose influence never reach'd this earth ;
Tho' since creation, passing globes it spring,
Swift as the barb upon the light'ning's wing !
Ev'n Admiration's loft, and faints, to dwell 2125
On themes, that angels lack the power to tell !
How great that ARM who built what never fails !
Mark'd out, and pois'd the universe in scales !
Whole systems shrink to nothing in HIS eye : —
Earth's half an atom!—what, ye Powers, am I ? 2130

Is't not to cloud their MAKER to my sight,
And daring bound OMNIPOTENCY's might,
For Pride to hint, yon spacious fields of heaven,
The starry regions, have no tenants given ?
IMPARTIAL GOODNESS smiles alike on all, 2135
Whose wisdom launch'd not but a perfect ball ;
Nature must *bere* promote a suited race,
Nor work unhallow'd in a waste of space.

The moon, the planets, and yon starry host,
 Their various orders of existence boast: 2140
 The Sun himself attempter'd beings rears,
 To fill some blank that links created spheres;
 Each made for each, concordant natures give
 What blessings answer the pursuits, TO LIVE.
 Tests of obedience mark the good in all, 2145
 As laws report them or to stand or fall.
 Are other worlds for other Adams curst?
 Have schemes of mercy sav'd the rebel, lost?

SOME be the seats where hopes and fears may cloy,
 In budding Virtue's infancy of joy: 2150
 Some where obedience, long-unfeign'd, may prove
 Bliss more aspiring to INFINITE LOVE:
 Some the abodes where kindred spirits stray,
 And quaff the nectar of immortal day.
 Yes! who, like me, once brav'd the storms of time, 2155
 And left some world unspotted with a crime.
 What, tho' the image of your MAKER shine
 With brighter lustre in your forms DIVINE?
 Your essence farther from the GODHEAD moves, 2160
 Than man's low system your perfection proves.
 Think not, thou seraph! that we daunted soar,
 Hopeless to meet you on a future shore;

We soon shall come! to second being born,
 My panting soul anticipates the morn!
 Till then, my thoughts, on musing pinions borne
 Of mild devotion, view your sacred throne: 2165
 Your gilded roofs my admiration claim,
 Nor thou, fair angel! such attention blame.
 Ye, that attended, when th' ETERNAL saw
 Rude Chaos fashion'd into Order's law:
 When, with the finger of his forming hand, 2170
 Worlds tumbled music, and besought a stand:
 When system'd suns, just-finish'd, sprang, to bound
 Thro' first-call'd Nature, and rejoic'd the round;
 If special sanction to divulge be given,
 (And sure creation's not unsung in heav'n!) 2175
 Smile on our earthly skill—thine own declare—
 What matter form'd these orbs, so good, so fair?
 From the dark womb of shapeless nothing! how?
 'Twas puzzle then, 'tis ten times darker now!

BENEATH this arched canopy of state 2180
 My thoughts on heavenly contemplation wait:
 Touch'd with religious dread, and, lost, I gaze
 With faint conceptions of th' ALMIGHTY's praise.

SEE! faithful Strephon, the young cottage hind,
Flies o'er the fields, his favourite fair to find: 2185
With hasty steps he'll brush the chequer'd lawn,
Thro' untrod mazes of luxuriant corn;
Or where yon foot-path cuts the village-road,
And leads the wanderer from his mild abode,
He skips the jasmin'd stile, the dewy plain, 2190
While meek-ey'd Cynthia guides the harmless swain:
He shuns the balmy couch, frail Nature's aid,
And pays his promise to the much-lov'd maid.
His fair-one, mindful of the vow she'd sworn,
On nimblest wings of chaste affection borne, 2195
Trips thro' the groves, just at th' appointed hour,
And finds her lover in the woodbine bower.
These give a pattern to the virtuous fair;
And all the swains admire the faithful pair.

SOME female, too, whose haggard looks destroy 2200
The virgin's worth, the self-approving joy,
Far from the umbrage of maternal care,
With bleeding bosom, seeks the cave, despair.
Her blifs, her honour, and her youth's betray'd,
And, all but guilt, desert the perjur'd maid. 2205
Traitor! she curses thy pretended fires——
Think, her peace bleeds, her innocence expires,

For thee she's forc'd to quit her peaceful cell,
 Adopted daughter of the hags of hell :
 Thro' street or city-lane she roves along, 2210
 And lures fair Virtue with a Syren's tongue,
 When Innocency smiles on slumbering down,
 And cares no more disturb the sleepy clown :
 'Tis one more pang, to think thee, scornful, there
 Lock'd in th' embraces of some rival fair. 2215

YE heedless sons of Pleasure's smiling train !
 Whose rude conceptions think that virtue's vain ;
 Who idly revel in the nightly tour,
 With bloated Bacchus and the feather'd Hour,
 When lawless Love, and Syren Beauty's Bane 2220
 Wave their sweet poppies to the fuddled brain,
 Know ! Death's in ambush round the treacherous bowls,
 To flash repentance on your guilty souls !

AH ! dreadful thought ! perhaps the villain band,
 With rage infernal in a human hand, 2225
 On vile intent besets the peaceful farm,
 Bribes the dull mastiff—and *to die's* the alarm !
 The man unmask'd, a neighbour sues to spare
 His wife, his children, or admit them pray'r :

The deed's not secret!—and he's urg'd to dart 2230
The high-heav'd dagger at a brother's heart.
Sweet-smiling saints to heavenly mansions flew,
Whose infant bosoms not the journey knew:
Hark! Vengeance mutters in th' untimely knell,
Can smothering conscience not in sackcloth tell? 2235
Go! steel'd with guilt, belie the front of man,
Yet know an EYE thy secret thoughts doth scan:
HE haunts thee, flying to the darksome cell,
Shun HIM thou canst not, for thine heart is hell;
HE saw thy crimes, while yet the budding seed, 2240
And Justice listens to avenge the deed.

THIS awful moment bids me hold the lay!
'Tis not the present nor a future day:—
'Tis like the brink of time—'tis night profound—
'Tis finish'd, ready for another round— 2245
'Tis gone—and, Nature, is the scroll unfurl'd,
Mark'd with the minutes of a bankrupt world?
At thoughts like these I'm nothing! for I owe
To time's GREAT GIVER every breath I draw.

'Tis Nature's requiem sure! all, all are still, 2250
Echo scarce answers the cascaded rill:

The bleating folds are lull'd at last to sleep,
And stars the mastiff's nightly vigils keep :
A solemn stillness reigns ! shall I deride
With impious riot, or conceited pride ? 2255
No ! the slow pulse of Nature let me tell,
And muse to silence and the midnight knell.

BUT, hark ! yon owl, the luckless bird of night,
With feather'd horn, prowls, cautious, from the light :
She shuns the vocal copse, the tuneful hour, 2260
And hoots, well-pleas'd within her ivy'd bow'r.
Perch'd on the thatched roof, or cottage beam,
She frights the matron with a dismal scream ;
Who says the melancholy strain portends
Her husband's sickness, or the death of friends. 2265

PLEAS'D at the softening drought, the slippery fen,
The croaking frog leaps lightly from his den :
Along the reedy banks, now far, now near,
Thrills his hoarse chatter to th' inquiring ear.
By moonlight oft the running hedges claim 2270
A trembling audience from the village dame.

LET the sage hind belie the duping sight,
That fairy forms disturb'd the silent night ;

And by some spell misled the doubtful way
Far off yon hovel, where the village lay. 2275
And let a matron fill her nursling's ears,
And breed a monster of his childish fears;
Of dead men's ghosts, who mourn the soul's release,
Burst the clay prison to demand her peace;
Of old-wives practis'd with infernal art, 2280
And hags that play the wily sorcerers' part.
That when the beardless youth's to manhood grown,
The weeds yet flourish'd, in his bosom sown;
Harks to the village-grandmother in age,
With half a cent'ry's, grey experience sage, 2285
Of walking spirits without touch, that call
Their nightly revels in the Gothic hall.
A thousand shocks her nodding brow declares,
Ere Time with palsy tipt her silver hairs.
And when 'tis told, the shuddering clown admires 2290
Her boundless wisdom; and amaz'd retires.
The cautious schoolboy hears how dead men rise,
And shrinks the churchyard where his grandsire lies.

LET such as these in human weakness wade,
And fable follies upon Fancy's shade; 2295
My thoughts be such no guilty fears accuse;
Let heaven-born Virtue all her joys diffuse:

That blifs resulting from a cultur'd mind ;
 And Reason's mirror to each object join'd :
 Then shall my soul the timid world defy, 2300
 Her glaring errors, the fool-prating lie !
 Nor shall Presumption lead my steps astray,
 My soul abhors to tread the dangerous way !
 HEAVEN, in whose grasp omnipotency dwells,
 Can haunt the guilty with ten thousand hells. 2305
 These star-hung roofs, the cradled world, inspire
 Far better notions of their WAKEFUL SIRE :
 The night of dread HIS parent-hand disarms,
 And all Creation slumbers in HIS arms !
 I'll trust HIS goodness—'tis HIS Bounty steers 2310
 In Virtue's paths my unexperienc'd years.
 If in concealing glooms, their curse, their home,
 Those Furies wander and malignant roam ;
 Yet let me lean on WATCHFUL PROVIDENCE,
 HIS plenteous mercies interpose defence : 2315
 In midnight walks my fearless feet shall tread,
 For guardian angels shall protect my head !

YES ! Fancy, yes ! indulge the soothing strains :
 Legions now hover on those mimic'd plains.
 Bear witness, then, ye holy Sons of Light ! 2320
 Whose form's too glorious for my dim-ey'd sight,

Oft shall you see, when placid Evening reigns,
My footsteps wander on these lonely plains :
Oft shall you hear me, mingling in your throng,
Tune Meditation's melancholy song : 2325
My humbler harp shall join the seraph's lays,
In fainter whispers to your MAKER's praise.
But I bewail the *grand offence*, that stands
A badge, to thrust me from your friendly bands :
And every new relapse, continual curst 2330
With farther exile, in your image lost.
You still must hold the mystic veil in trust,
And shun the converse of polluted dust.

YET say, my brothers, may not Reason's eye
Around me crowds of seraphim espy ? 2335
Perhaps, commision'd by th' ETERNAL SIRE,
Some leave the timbrel, and the gazing quire,
With me, even me, to bid the night be sung,
And touch their fingers to unloose my tongue.
Perhaps they guard me thro' these earthly glooms 2340
From pits secreted for untimely tombs :
And watch where fiends, consulting malice, dwell,
To curb the minions of presumptuous Hell !
This grove's not dark to you, whose footsteps ray
The track celestial into boundless day. 2345

NO CRUDE devotion, misapply'd, I sing,
Of praise to rob your derogated KING :
Yet, ye bright Cherubs ! who can still my fears,
Ye friends peculiar of the young in years,
(who smile to see the struggling buds of truth, 2350
The pant for virtue, in the storms of youth ;
From stage to stage who smooth the thorny way,
And oft from evil snatch th' untainted prey ;
Who bid temptations not surpass his pow'r,
Try'd but to conquer, and but sunk to tow'r ; 2355
Till from his dust you waft him to your quire,
A brother then to strike the heavenly lyre.)
If HEAVEN's behest forbids not that I pray,
To you's my suit, O listen to the lay.
As thus the brow of peaceful Night I wreath, 2360
Oft in the ear of Meditation breathe ;
Tune to my ravish'd sense your MASTER's praise,
And mix the seraph's and the poet's lays ;
Then, when dull Nature shall her haunts forsake,
And you, Immortals ! keep the groves awake, 2365
O soothe my slumbers ! hint the hopeful dream !
And constant-dictate my night-warbling theme.
If the freed spirit quit the senseless clay,
And airy-rove some solitary way,

Her Guardians, lead her to your sacred rills, 2370
Your favourite grottos, and your fairy hills :
Give each kind image, fire the flagging strain,
And, angel-vision'd, send her home again.

As SUMMER wantons on his sun-bright glades,
Full-blooming, then, to sober Autumn fades ; 2375
So, MANHOOD ! flourish thy few fleeting hours,
And boast perfection, and superior pow'rs :
Go ! be a wit ; be motley Pleasure's tool ;
Of head-strong passions be the willing fool :
Yet Age arrests thee, gives to Vice her fill, 3380
Chills the warm tide, and mortifies the will,

SHOULD PROVIDENCE, (be blest th' unerring plan !)
Steer the Muse farther, till she call me man ;
And fifty SUMMERS of enchanted ground
Thrust to the verge the Autumn of my round, 3385
O ! may she too have finish'd, like the year,
The task assigned to her station here !
Be then the joy to ripen a fit store,
A stock of wisdom, for she learns no more !

THE END.

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